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HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

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How To Find and Follow Your Career

*STRAIGHT THINKING
ON CAREER PLANNING*

BY

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HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

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PREFACE

IN 1922, while on the staff of Carnegie Institute of Technology, I made a study of what becomes of the engineering graduates of that institution—that is, what kind of work they followed when they got out into the world. The results were startling.

Here's how the whole thing came about. Walking down the hallway in the School of Engineering at five minutes past nine, one crisp October morning, I heard an explosion of student cheers. Suddenly a group of young men burst out of a classroom with an awful war whoop.

"No class today!" The professor was late and the five-minute "waiting time" was up.

Now I realize that this is not an uncommon occurrence in our universities. As a student I had often taken part in similar celebrations.

But now it shocked me.

I recalled seeing these same students patiently wait in line for hours on Registration Day to pay

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out their hard cash (or their parents') for education. To all appearances they were dead in earnest. To the casual observer it meant youth thirsting for knowledge. But when I saw them so delighted, running out of that classroom like a gang of prisoners suddenly set free, I began to change my mind about that "thirst."

"Education," I said to a friend, "is the only product I know of which young men stand in line and pay good money for and then are tickled to death if the product is not delivered."

"Why," I asked myself, "is this true? Can these young men be very seriously interested in engineering?"

I began asking students why they were there. Only a small percentage indicated that they had made a thoughtful selection of engineering as their life's work. For the most part they had drifted into an engineering course because "they thought engineering was the coming thing," or because "their family or friends wanted them to," or because "they had connections," or because "there's good pay in it."

For the first time in my life I began to appre-

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ciate the importance of developing some orderly procedure whereby young men and women could arrive at an intelligent selection of their life's work.

I knew that I had discovered something important, but I felt equally sure that that class was not unique and that this condition had been going on for some time. Later, tracing the history of those who had been graduated, I found just what you might expect.¹ Approximately two-thirds of the graduates, 67 per cent, wound up in lines of work other than engineering. How many were miscast to begin with in an engineering course?

In the scientific laboratories they had learned to make precise observations, to define problems, to gather and weigh evidence, and to arrive at sound conclusions. But apparently it had never occurred to them to apply this same orderly thinking to the selection of their own life's work. They had used this orderly procedure to test the strength and weakness of raw materials, thereby determining where those materials could best be used. Why

¹ "What Becomes of the C. I. T. Engineering Graduate?" by W. J. Reilly and W. F. Rittman, *The Carnegie Technical Journal*, November, 1922.

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not apply the same rules to the study of their own basic abilities, likes, and dislikes, to find out in what field they could best be employed?

At least it seemed worth a trial.

Experiments first with students, and later with those in other age and occupational groups, developed sound methods of procedure, and in the fall of 1932, The William John Reilly Institute for Straight Thinking was founded for the purpose of casting young men in the right rôle and helping them to pursue the kind of work they love most.

This book gives the simple procedure which has been successfully followed by those who attended that Institute. It explains just how you can proceed to work out your own individual problem, and illustrates each step with actual cases of what ordinary people have done and can do. It brings a plan for economic independence and true happiness within the reach of anyone who honestly desires to improve himself.

If you are one of the million young men who march from our schools every year, hoping to find your place of usefulness in the world; if you are

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one of the million young men who marry every year, and for the first time in your life, are beginning to give serious thought to the future; or if you are one of the millions of older men who have made the belated discovery that your energies have been directed into work which does not interest you and which has become a drudgery—this book is written for you. In short, it is written for anyone who has not yet given up hope of finding and following the kind of work which will permit him to make the fullest use of his special abilities and to enjoy the greatest rewards and pleasures of life.

W. J. R.

September, 1936

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PART I

THE PROBLEM OF CHOOSING
YOUR CAREER

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CHAPTER I

TAKE YOUR CHOICE

IT IS said that you can take a frog at the prime of life, put him in a pan of water at room temperature, gradually increase the temperature of that water to the boiling-point, and Mr. Frog will not jump out. Without being aware that a change is taking place, he will gradually be lulled into unconsciousness—boiled.

And you can take a man aflame with youthful hope and ambition, put him in a job which he does not like, and his duties soon become a monotonous routine that slowly dulls his senses and ultimately leads to mental coma. In the day-to-day course of my business contacts, as I walk into offices, through factories and stores, I find myself so often looking into the empty expressionless faces of men going through mechanical motions, men whose minds are stunned and slowly dying.

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You have your choice. You can die like a frog in a pan of water. But you don't have to. You can jump out, if you wish. Suit yourself. You can be an individual and do what you want to do. Or you can take a job that happens to present itself, work at the job until you get into the groove, get the normal wage increases and advancements that naturally follow, be periodically subject to the fears and hardships of unemployment, become just like millions of others, gradually die a mental death, and finally a physical one, without ever giving yourself a chance to develop your individual capacities, without ever doing what you really want to do.

Life really begins when you have discovered that you can do anything you want. That is, if you want to do it bad enough.

Harry Lauder started out as a pit boy. He drove a pony underground in the mines of Scotland. Later he became a full-fledged miner. But he wanted to sing. During the fourteen years he worked underground he always dreamed of developing his voice and getting "out of the pits." He sang to the miners during dinner hour. He

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sang in neighboring towns whenever he got a chance. He won first prize in a local singing contest. He began writing songs. Soon he was able to earn a meager living. He went to London, and after innumerable attempts to secure a hearing, finally made his first appearance at Gatti's. Then he received plenty of offers.

Sinclair Lewis, after trying various kinds of jobs which he didn't like, determined to devote himself seriously to literature. He journeyed to California, where he camped out for six months on the dunes at Carmel, "cooked his own meals and wrote furiously day and night. He produced piles of poetry and prose, and during those six months of writing sonnets, short stories, novelettes, aphorisms, and poems, he sold just one thing—a joke—to *Judge* for three dollars." Later, in 1914, "he wrote *Our Mr. Wrenn* during unnumbered nights while holding a full-time job. . . . He wrote *The Trail of the Hawk* on a commuters' train between New York and Long Island. . . . For fifteen years he planned the writing of *Main Street*. He started it three times and in the last attempt, previous to the completed work, he wrote 30,000 words, only to

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throw the whole script away. When *Main Street* was finally whipped into final shape he remarked to some one that at last he had written a novel merely to please himself and he didn't suppose it would sell more than the usual allotment, about 2,000 copies."¹

Most of us know of Lincoln's great achievements, but the long succession of defeats which preceded these achievements are not generally known. As a young man he ran for the Illinois legislature and was defeated. Next he tried business and failed. He ran for Congress and was defeated. He tried to get an appointment to the United States Land Office and failed. He ran for United States Senator and was defeated. He was defeated as a candidate for the Vice-Presidency. Two years later Douglas defeated him. But he wanted a political career bad enough to go on in spite of one failure after another.

Read the biography of anyone who has received world-wide acclaim and you will usually find it to be the story of a person who did what he

¹ *Sixteen Authors to One*, David Karsner, p. 67. Lewis Copeland Co., 1928.

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wanted to do and who experienced many tragic defeats "on the way up."

But fame has no necessary connection with greatness. Anyone is truly great who does what he wants to do. Whether he becomes famous doing it doesn't matter so much.

Amelia Earhart expressed it well when she wrote:²

"I flew the Atlantic because I wanted to.

"If that be what they call 'a woman's reason,' make the most of it. It isn't, I think, a reason to be apologized for, by man or woman. It is the most honest motive for the majority of mankind's achievements. To want in one's heart to do a thing, for its own sake; to enjoy doing it; to concentrate all one's energies upon it—that is not only the surest guarantee of its success. It is also being true to oneself.

"Whether you are flying the Atlantic, or selling sausages, or building a skyscraper, or driving a truck, or painting a picture, or ski-

² "Flying the Atlantic," by Amelia Earhart, *The American Magazine*, August, 1932, p. 15.

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ing down an unknown hill, or nursing shell-shock patients in a hospital, or running a grocery store in Atchison, Kansas—your greatest power comes from the fact that you want tremendously to do that very thing, and do it well.

"If you worry about the money you will make from it, or what people will say about you, or whether you will stub your toe or bark your shins, then you are frittering away that power—that inner concentration on the goal itself. 'To thine own self be true . . . thou canst not then be false to any man.' Thus Mr. Shakespeare gave the answer more than three hundred years ago."

It isn't necessary to review the lives of well-known men in order to find those who are true to themselves and who are doing what they want to do in the face of great obstacles. In fact, some of the most startling cases are to be found among ordinary men who have never achieved fame, but who have found the joy of self-expression. Everyday life is full of such cases.

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Did you know that the piano player with one of the leading orchestras in the country has no index fingers? Some years ago they were cut off with a band saw, but he was determined to study the piano.

At the Commencement exercises of one of our New York high schools a few years ago, there was one youth pitied by all the others as he walked to the platform to claim his diploma. A likable fellow. But when he was thirteen he had stopped growing. Yes, he would be a "shrimp" the rest of his life. The world seemed to offer great opportunity for all but him. What would he do? Today he is one of the few members of that class who are successful, in an occupation that he loves. He interested himself in horses, studied riding, became a jockey.

A widow in St. Louis was faced with the loss of her income. Threatened with the prospect of financial hardship in her declining years, she decided that she could sell younger men and women on the wisdom of insuring themselves against such risks. She launched herself into the insurance business in the famous week in March, 1933, when

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every bank in the country was closed! It was weeks before she sold her first policy. But before the first year was finished she had sold more annuity contracts than any salesman in her company.

I know a man, thirty-six and bald, who, after he was married, got sick of working at a lathe in a pattern shop. He decided to study medicine. Today he and his wife are both working—he in a garage at night and she in a hat shop. But he is studying medicine during the day. In a few years he will be a physician.

In Hollywood I met a Russian boy who had a job in a Russian restaurant washing dishes from six to eleven in the morning and from four in the afternoon till eleven at night. For this he received two dollars a week in cash, his meals, and the privilege of sleeping in the garage.

"A pathetic figure," you say.

Not at all. He had a reason for being there. In his mind were plans—dreams.

Early one Sunday afternoon he called at my home and told his story. "It is cold in garage," he said, simply. "But I have not any choice. I leave

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Russia after Revolution. My father was general in Russian Czar's Army. I was preparing myself in military high school to become officer. Revolution is terrible thing. I went to Harbin—Russian city in China. There I went to Russian Polytechnic Institute to become electrical engineer. I never lived alone and do not work before. I had not enough money.

"Then I came to United States. I started learn hard English language. I have had very hard time knowing very little English language. I took any job what I can find; laborer, cook, janitor. Job after job, not more than two weeks one place. I could not stand its atmosphere. I came to Hollywood try my luck in pictures. I was doing extra work. I got broke.

"So I was drifting.

"One day I said to myself, 'I do not want to be laborer or common cook or janitor all my life. I like to cook, to prepare salads, to study music. I will learn restaurant business. I will have my own Russian restaurant. That will give me time to play my guitar and to sing.' "

From dishwasher to salad boy to singing waiter

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to partner in a Russian restaurant brings his story up to date. His next step is "sole owner."

One of the best friends I have is a crippled boy of nineteen who lives in a little town in Illinois. He supports his mother—an invalid. A year ago he was sweeping floors in a garage. He decided he wanted to write. He went to the editor of his home-town newspaper and asked him for a job. The editor turned him down. He began to read about great reporters. He joined all kinds of essay contests. Every night for nine months he wrote a short essay. That's a good many essays. Two of them turned out to be prize-winners. Every now and then he stopped in to tell the editor of the paper what he was doing. After nine months the editor gave him a half-time job as a cub reporter. Now he is working half time in the garage and half time for the newspaper. Do you think he's having fun? He's happier than another friend of mine who is president of a large company. This boy is doing what he wants to do; the president isn't.

These people I have been telling you about are plain everyday folks who found out what they

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wanted to do and set about doing it in the easiest and most reasonable way possible, considering their circumstances.

Your life can be just as great as theirs. But you must first believe your life is important, just as they did, before you can ever make it so. Obstacles are the only things that make life worth living. Without obstacles life would be robbed of the real joy of victory and achievement.

When we consider that each of us has only one life to live, isn't it rather tragic to find men, with brains capable of comprehending the stars and the planets, talking about the weather; men, with hands capable of creating works of art, using those hands only for routine tasks; men, capable of independent thought, using their minds as a bowling-alley for popular ideas; men, capable of self-expression, slowly dying a mental death while they babble the confused monotone of the mob?

For you, life can be a succession of glorious adventures. Or it can be a monotonous bore.

Take your choice!

CHAPTER II

WHY WE DON'T DO WHAT WE WANT TO DO

IN THE dining-room of a fashionable New York hotel sat a dowager with a shrill-whistled voice, reminiscing *at* an old fellow across the table who never opened his mouth save for food. Her voice could be heard by everyone in the room except a fortunate deaf and dumb couple in the corner.

"Were I eighteen again," she said, slowly, poised like Mary Boland for a flight of the imagination—"ah, you know what I mean, were I eighteen, that is, you understand, were I eighteen again, I'd *do* it!"

As I glanced at her—fat, fluffy, and fifty—I felt like yelling over: "Oh no, you wouldn't! You *were* eighteen and you *didn't*!"

Most of us live in a curious dream world. The young live in the promises of the future. The old live in the unembraced opportunities of the past. A young man says, "As soon as I get the time and

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get a few dollars ahead, I'm going to . . ." The
old man says, "If I were young again, I'd . . ."

I have had young men tell me in a loud voice
what they definitely planned to do. I have had
older men tell me in a whisper of what they al-
ways dreamed of doing—but never did.

A young man in Hollywood who tried to sell
me some insurance (and who revealed, by the way
he went about the job, that he didn't like it) told
me: "What I like best is to hang around Police
Headquarters. I've made friends with a few of
the men on the detective force down there. They
tip me off when criminal cases come up. That's
the kind of stuff that fascinates me. If I had it to
do over again, that's what I'd study. I've often
thought I'd like to quit the insurance job and get
into detective work. But my wife thinks I'm crazy
to waste time thinking of such a thing. As she says,
it's too late now, me married with two kids. Sell-
ing insurance is a lousy way to make a living, but
we're eating."

A student, just out of engineering school, knew
what he wanted to do, but he too had difficult
hurdles.

"I've worked in American oil fields for three

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summers," he explained, "and I'm satisfied that I want to go into the oil business. I have this opportunity to go to South America and then to India for a large oil company. There's nothing in the world I'd rather do than learn more about oil production, transportation, refining, and trading problems in various parts of the world and then specialize in one of these fields. But I really don't see how I can take this job abroad. Eloise and I are head over heels in love—you know that. We want to be married. She doesn't want to go to South America or India, and it's a cinch I wouldn't go without her. She wants me to get a job and settle down here in Pittsburgh where our folks are."

A young man who had been a salesman in a department store, a clerk in an advertising agency, and a checker in a furniture factory, confided: "I don't know whether I ought to tell you this or not, but ever since I heard of the excavations in Egypt I've read everything I could get on the subject. If I only could I'd like to go to Egypt and attempt to find out what we could learn from those past civilizations."

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"And why don't you do that?" I asked him.

"Why? That's simple. I couldn't get a job with an expedition. I'd have to go back to college and study ancient history and hieroglyphics, and all that, and I haven't any money."

I have talked with many young men in college whose families are wealthy, and curiously enough, few of them are even studying the things they like. A young man in law school would like to be a geologist, but is studying law because his father has promised to groom him into his profitable practice. An engineering student in one of our leading universities wants to be an interior decorator, but because he has a "sure job" with his uncle's construction company when he gets out of school, he is trying (unsuccessfully, since he is not in the least interested in engineering) to "plow through the darned old courses."

A mechanic in a railroad roundhouse told me he wanted to write. "But a 'grease-monkey' in a shop like this doesn't get much time to look around for interesting things to write about," he told me.

A gasoline-station attendant, bright and promising, said that he wanted to go into accounting,

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but had been forced to give up a correspondence course in the subject because he "hadn't the time" to go through with it.

Recently I talked with a man, nearly fifty, who is a copy-writer in a New York advertising agency. He told me he had wanted to paint landscapes ever since he was in high school.

"May I see some of your work sometime?" I asked.

"Oh, I've never really finished anything," he half apologized. "I've never had the time. I've always had to work for a living. But some day I hope to get enough money ahead and have some leisure time. Then I'm going to do exactly what I want to do. I'm going to paint. Writing copy gets pretty dull, but it's a means to an end."

How often we hear men say that what they are doing is merely a means to an end! But the tragic part about it all is that they'll spend their time until they die working on the means and never reach the end at all.

In confidential sessions with men and women, ranging from sixteen to sixty, I have listened to all kinds of cases. A civil engineer is unhappy;

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ever since a young man he has wanted to be a priest. A mother of five children, who plays bridge three or four afternoons a week, is fed up on life; she has always wanted to cultivate her voice. An advertising solicitor in his forties has always wanted to be a violinist—a great violinist. A contractor has always wanted to be a physician.

I could recite scores of such cases to you. And I haven't heard a new excuse for years. It's "I haven't the time," "I haven't the money," or "My folks don't want me to."

Take your own case. Every time in your life that you ever entertained the thought of going into that work which you like best, weren't you haunted at the very outset with the feeling that it is quite futile, if not downright foolish, for you even to dream of accomplishing any unusual goal? And then, haunted with this feeling of futility, didn't you seize upon one or more of the following excuses?

- (1) I haven't the time. I'm busy—where would I ever find the time to do such a thing?
- (2) I haven't the money right now. Some day

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I'll have enough money and then I'll do what I want to do.

- (3) My folks don't want me to. My family wouldn't want me to go into anything like that. It wouldn't be fair to them. What would my friends think?

Let's examine these common excuses and see if they really hold water.

"I Haven't the Time."—Without Time nothing is possible. Neither money-making nor pleasure-seeking, thought nor laughter, achievement nor failure. Everything requires Time. Time is the only permanent and absolute ruler in the universe. You or anyone else can do nothing without her. She is indispensable—immovable. But she is a scrupulously fair ruler. She treats every living person exactly alike every day. No matter how much of the world's goods you have managed to accumulate, you cannot successfully plead for a single moment more than the pauper receives without ever asking for it. Time is the one great leveler. Everyone has the same amount to spend every day.

The next time you feel that you "haven't the

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time" to do what you really want to do, it may be worth while for you to remember that you have just as much time as President Roosevelt or Mussolini, twenty-four hours a day. It has been said that the normal mother fly has 320 children four times a year, and still seems able to go out considerably betweentimes.

Suppose you have a full-time job that keeps you occupied from nine to five, six days a week. All right, that time is sold. In return, you get enough to "live on," let us say. The other sixteen hours a day, you may spend in the same way as a man who lives independently on an annuity and who is pictured so happily in the insurance company advertisements. Truly, just the same.

But what do you do with the other sixteen hours a day? Sleep eight. Yes, but that leaves eight.

I am not suggesting for a moment that you give up your favorite diversions. But I think you will be surprised to learn, later in our discussion, the small part of this remaining eight hours which it is necessary to devote in the beginning to the thing you want to do, and the remarkable achievements possible for anyone who will consistently devote

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even as little as one hour a day to one single purpose. And the unvarnished truth is that every one of us who mouths the old excuse, "I haven't the time," wastes much more than an hour every day of his life.

When I examined the daily schedule of the gas-station attendant who told me he wanted to go into accounting, but hadn't the time to continue his correspondence course in the subject, I found that he had played bridge two evenings, gone to the movies two evenings, and attended a dance one evening of the previous week.

When the railroad mechanic told me he wanted to write, but "a 'grease-monkey' in a shop like this doesn't get time to look around for interesting things to write about," I pointed out an old connecting-rod that was on the floor at our feet. "Where did this come from?" I asked.

"Oh, off one of those locomotives," was his off-hand reply.

"I want you to write something about that rod every day for the next thirty days," I told him. "Find an hour in the evening. Work on it then."

The first evening he simply wrote a mechanic's

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description of the rod, that it was so long, had a cross-section like an hour-glass, had certain dimensions, etc. But before the thirty days had passed he had written a real thriller. A mother was entrained rushing to the bedside of her dying son who had been injured in an automobile accident. The engineer knew that she was on board, and the giant locomotive seemed to understand how much depended upon it as it plunged headlong into the night at terrific speed.

Suddenly the connecting-rod developed sharp pains and knew what that meant—an air-bubble flaw. Fighting pain and fatigue, the rod strained every molecule to hold itself together. Finally, as the mother reached her destination and the locomotive was about to stop in the station, the connecting-rod, knowing its job had been done, snapped in two—the real hero of this young man's thrilling story.

It is generally recognized and accepted that only the busiest people ever have time for anything. An American tourist who had no duties whatsoever spent a year in France, yet "never had the time" to study French. An American secretary,

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with a ten-weeks job in France that kept him occupied fourteen hours a day, learned French in the remaining two hours a day that he had available.

You can tell me pretty accurately how you have spent your money during the past year. But can you give an accurate account of what has happened to your most valuable possession, Time? You may get more money, but that Time is spent. And whatever part of it you have wasted is lost forever.

If you want to get a shock, put down on paper a rough outline of how you spent each hour of the day for the past seven days. Then keep a record of what happens to each hour for the next seven days.

A friend once said to Edison, "You lay down rather severe rules for one who wishes to succeed in life—working eighteen hours a day."

Edison answered, "Not at all. You do *something* all day long, don't you? Everyone does. If you get up at seven o'clock and go to bed at eleven, you have put in sixteen good hours, and it is certain that you have been doing something all that time. The only difference is that you do a great many things and I do one. If you took the time in question and applied it in one direction, you

WHY WE DON'T DO WHAT WE WANT TO DO would succeed. Success is sure to follow such application. The trouble lies in the fact that people do not have one thing to stick to, letting all else go."¹

But a person cannot apply himself to his work incessantly without growing weary unless he loves it. And that's the real explanation of Edison's full use of his time.

If you were to spend an hour alone with the loud tick of a clock, or better yet, if you could spend an hour completely alone with an hour-glass, watching the sands of Time quickly slip through that vessel, and realize that 100 years from now you and I will both be gone, then you would begin to appreciate that TIME is the ONLY thing you really DO HAVE, and that you alone can do anything you wish with the Time that is yours.²

If a personal case will be allowed, it may be interesting for you to know that this very sentence is being written at the railroad station out in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, while I wait for my train, an hour

¹ *How They Succeeded*, by O. S. Marden, p. 237. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., Boston, 1901.

² For one of the ablest discussions bearing on the organization of time, see *How to Live on Twenty-four Hours a Day*, by Arnold Bennett. Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1910.

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and thirty minutes late, and while others, waiting for the same train, walk around and sigh and make themselves miserable trying to kill time until the train gets in.

"I Haven't the Money."—Ordinarily the older we get, the more emphasis we put upon money, the more we think money. And so it might be difficult for you to appreciate the fact that money is secondary. I didn't say money is of no importance. I said it is secondary.

Even if you have a strong desire to accumulate wealth, still you must look upon money as secondary to the development of your natural abilities to produce something of value. In Taos, New Mexico, a self-contained little Indian pueblo, with only a few hundred inhabitants, the last of their tribe, I witnessed a practical demonstration of this fundamental lesson which holds in the market-places of the world. This little Indian pueblo was overrun with begging children, saying: "Five cent, penny. Five cent, penny." They received little. But over in one corner of the pueblo, the periodic beat of a tom-tom drew visitors to a small room where

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an Indian boy, aged four, did primitive dances and did them well. He received money, more than all the other children of the pueblo combined, without asking for it, simply because he was able to do one thing well.

Similarly, the world is overrun with those who beg, saying: "Give me a job. Give me a chance. Give me an opportunity." While the few who have developed their natural abilities and who are able to do one thing well, receive large financial rewards without even asking for them.

Study the biographies of those who have built up great fortunes, and you will learn that money came to them as an incident *after* they had produced or discovered something. Ford is a typical example of this. Edison is another. Edison never thought of saving his money. He kept spending whatever he got on materials for new experiments. When he got money for something, he was no longer interested in that invention. He said, "I have not talked on the telephone for ten years, and I would go a good distance out of my way to avoid looking at an incandescent light. When I

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am working on a problem, I love it. When I get money for the finished product, I hate it.”^a

Chaliapin, long before he became a great opera singer, entered a Russian church, penniless, almost starving, and asked the priest to let him sing in the choir. The priest sent him away, saying he had no voice. It was not until Chaliapin trained and developed his voice that he received rich rewards.

Even more dramatic cases are found among those not so well known. George Washington Carver was the son of a slave and a slave himself. He had no money. But he knew what he wanted to do. He wanted to study chemistry. Starting with nothing, he collected old scraps from ashheaps and rigged up a crude laboratory. He made insulating walls for houses from discarded peanut shells. He made synthetic marble from wasted wood shavings. He made hundreds of different useful products from so-called useless materials. He studied, and became a Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, Honorary Doctor of Science, winner of the Spingarn Medal for Negro Achieve-

^a *How They Succeeded*, by O. S. Marden, p. 236. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., Boston, 1901.

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ment. From nothing, one might say, he created
wealth.

Neither poverty nor riches has anything to do with the job of self-expression, except that the possession of money is likely to remove the pressure of necessity and lull us into a lazy coma. Financial security—soft living, plenty to eat, an easy-chair, comfortable slippers, a warm fire—these are enough to ruin any man.

After Turner and Pangborn had finished the air race from England to Australia, I heard them tell an intimate story of the whole affair. In the first place, they didn't have the money to build the latest type racing plane. They had to pool what parts and equipment they had and overcome the mechanical difficulties of building a plane that would stand up in the long race, nearly halfway around the world. They didn't have enough money to pay their passage and the expense of getting their plane to England until a few hours before the last boat that would get them to the starting line in time was to sail.

When the boat docked in England, the rough weather would not permit the unloading of their

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plane and it was taken on to France. There they faced the problem of getting the plane back to England. They had no clearance papers to land it on French soil and fly it back, and there was no adequate-sized boat scheduled to go back to England in time for the start of the race. Then they learned of a small freighter that was shoving off for England, but its deck was too small to accommodate the plane. After long negotiations with the skipper, he agreed to cut part of the deck railing away so that the plane could be placed on board with part of it extending over the side.

Once in England, they had a tough time convincing the entrance judges that they had "regulation" equipment. For one thing, the judges didn't approve of the kind of tires on their landing wheels. And there were no "regulation" tires to fit their wheels on sale anywhere in England.

Only after some last-minute scurrying around for other odds and ends were they finally able to get the official approval of their entrance in the race.

Turner and Pangborn overcame one "impossible" situation after another from the time they

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decided to enter the race until they crossed the finish line. It was a story of "high" living.

Within the scope of your own experience, if you will only stop to think, you know of more than one case in which a man, with no money and with no more will power than you, succeeded in doing what he wanted to do.

When the young man interested in Egyptology explained that his case was hopeless because he had no money, I assured him that his immediate problem was not to get money to finance himself.

"One of the leaders in the study of Egyptology is Professor Breasted at The University of Chicago," I told him. "Your first step is to write him. Or better yet, go to see him if you can. Tell him what you have definitely decided to do. Ask him what courses he would suggest that you take. Ask him to suggest simple problems in the field for you to be reading about and thinking about, so that when you get your bachelor's degree you will be in a favorable competitive position with others to apply for a fellowship to carry on graduate study. Ask Professor Breasted if he has any rocks to crack or any windows to be washed or any

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floors to be swept, or anything at all to suggest to a young man who must make his own way as he goes. I've never heard of a case where a man with this kind of conviction has ever been turned away from a university or has ever starved while working his way through."

To prove to ourselves that money is never essential to self-expression of any kind, we have only to recall that some of the greatest characters who have ever lived, died poor. Spinoza, perhaps the world's outstanding abstract philosopher, left only a bed and a penknife when he died. But the works he left behind have taught and stimulated millions.

When Michelangelo was building St. Peter's, he told the Pope, "Your Holiness knows that I gain nothing by it except the good of my soul."

Franz Schubert died at 31, leaving 600 songs, a number of symphonies, and personal effects worth \$10.00.

Who can estimate the value of contributions to the world, made by such men as Steinmetz, Wagner, Socrates, and even Christ? They all died poor.

In a world marked by constant change, where

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the rich of today are often the poor of tomorrow, due to circumstances beyond their control, the only security is your ability to produce something of value for your fellow man, and your only guarantee of happiness is your joy in producing it.

True happiness lies in the pursuit of your goal, achievement in your favorite line of work. This must always remain primary. Whenever money becomes primary, you are on treacherous ground. Every time a financial depression occurs the world is reminded all over again that the most pathetic figure in human life is the man who has permitted money to become the primary motivating force in his life. If his wealth is destroyed, because of a series of incidents over which he has no control, he, who has permitted his very self to become identified with that wealth, has nothing left to do but to jump out of the window—commit suicide. History is full of such cases.

"My Folks Don't Want Me To."—We are all familiar with the fact that parents usually like to dominate the choice of their children in the selection of life's work.

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A mother came to me not long ago saying that her boy had his heart set on being a musician.

"See if you can't get the notion out of his head," she said. "You know there's no future in music now with the canned music at the movies and the radio and all that. Thousands of musicians are starving."

After I had spent an afternoon with this young man, listening to some of his own compositions, he and I organized a committee of two to "see if we couldn't get the notion out of *her* head."

Parents yield when the child is strong.

Ed Wynn's father, when he discovered he had a stage-struck son, "denounced the theater, saying no son of his would ever disgrace the family name on a bill post. Ed's offer to change his name was countered with 'No, because if you become famous, nobody will know you are my son.'"⁴ Later he did change his name. His family name was Leopold. His middle name was Edwin, which he split to form his stage name.

Wives sometimes have a way of interfering with a man's pursuing the work he is best fitted

⁴ "Ed Wynn," *Life*, December, 1932, p. 21.

WHY WE DON'T DO WHAT WE WANT TO DO for, especially if it makes undue demands on his time, or involves low pay or a change in location, or does not add to the social prestige of the family. But wives can be won over if husbands do not falter.

Sometimes sweethearts interfere. There was the young man whom I have already mentioned who wanted to go to South America for an oil company, but whose sweetheart wanted him to settle down and get a job in Pittsburgh.

"There's only one answer to that," I told him, "and you're the only one who can answer it. Of course you want to be married. It's not a question of whether you are going to do what you want to do *or* get married. You don't have to give up either one. If you feel you've got to get married, go ahead, and you and the *right* girl can work out your plans together. Plenty of others have done that. If you haven't the courage to do this thing now, while you are young and have your health and a minimum amount of responsibility, it is doubtful if you will ever amass the courage to do anything worth while."

Then, too, "what our friends and associates

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think" influences us more than we realize. We like to live the life and stay in the rôle which others expect of us. I know a recent graduate from medical school who is now making all kinds of unreasonable attempts to stick to medicine, even though he "hates the stuff"—merely because he insists on playing the part which is expected of him by relatives and friends.

Each of us is somewhat like an electric-light bulb, deriving its power from some central force. Just as the bulb accumulates dust and soot from the air around it until it is darkened, then blackened, so our individuality becomes dulled at first and then entirely blotted out from the accumulation of advice and interference which is superimposed upon us by family and friends. If you examine their advice, you will find that they are continually offering counsel based on their own experience in connection with a situation that is quite different from the one you are facing.

This does not mean that it is impossible to get constructive suggestions from some one else. The most important thing to remember is that you are to use only those suggestions that facilitate a fuller

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and more accurate expression of the individual objectives which you yourself believe to be worth while.

One thing is certain. You will neither venture anything nor achieve anything if you permit yourself to be unduly influenced by others. It isn't a very pleasant thought, but it is none the less true that some of the worst advice often springs from the short-sighted and selfish interests of those whom we love most.

Remember this. Only one sound mind is needed to create a sound idea. "Two heads are better than one" is a popular fallacy that is enthusiastically embraced by those who are too lazy to think alone. When two people lean on each other, how can either possibly become strong enough for independent thought?

There is no one more colorless than the self-conscious, vacillating person who is neither hot nor cold, wet nor dry, because he is always wondering what others will think of him and is always trying to please everybody.

Of all the half-baked ideas that pop into our minds and flow out of our mouths, one of the

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worst is that we must get the approval of some one else before we can go ahead with anything.

Man as a group is chaotic. If you follow the changing whims and wishes of others, you too will be chaotic. If, on the other hand, you hold to the thoughts that you yourself know to be sound, you will become placid, strong, independent, sure.

You can never be really YOU until you achieve mental freedom from the fears, hates, superstitions, prejudices, and opinions of those on the outside.

Lose that mental freedom and you lose everything.

The attitude of your folks and your friends, like public opinion in the mass, is fickle and contrary. The more you pursue its favor the less you gain it; the less you yield to it the more it turns toward you. The world intuitively worships a man who has the courage to be himself.

The moment you permit your happiness to depend upon the opinions or performance of some one else, guess what happens.

Now that we have calmly and sensibly exam-

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ined these three excuses—I haven't the time, I haven't the money, My folks don't want me to—we see that each of them melts away as an imaginary obstacle when we shine the light of intelligence upon it. We see that they are not real reasons at all, but merely excuses. And in later chapters it will become apparent that the real reasons why we do not do what we want to do are lack of planning and lack of courage.

If you read the story of any man who has ever achieved his goal, you will despise yourself for ever yielding to any of these imaginary excuses that are running through your mind and keeping you from becoming the man you can be.

To do what you really want to do is usually difficult—it's usually tough. But it is never impossible. In fact, I have come to pity anyone who is not attempting to do something that is "impossible." Why do you think so many men have accomplished the so-called impossible? Now we know as a matter of fact, by plain definition, that no one ever did the impossible. But many have done what appeared to be impossible to millions of people who have unknowingly surrendered to

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the negative mental attitudes that mean death.

If you surrender to any one or more of these three excuses—I haven't the time, I haven't the money, my folks don't want me to—you are destined to mental coma. Failure is certain. The lazy and inefficient use of time, the worship of money, and the futile pursuit of the approval of others will distort every worth-while desire in your heart and rob your life of any personal meaning.

If, on the other hand, you will entirely free your mind from these negative and destructive mental attitudes, you will become completely YOU, and nothing can stop you from doing what you want to do.

CHAPTER III

FOUR SIMPLE STEPS FOR CHOOSING YOUR CAREER

SURROUNDED as we are with the progress of science in all phases of industry, it is difficult to understand why we have been so slow in applying scientific methods to our own personal problems, the most important one of which is the disposition of our time and energies.

There is no mystery about the general procedure which is followed in scientific laboratories throughout the world. No matter what the problem, there are four traditional steps which all scientific workers accept and follow with monotonous regularity.

Step 1.—Some kind of an observation suggests an unanswered question or a problem.

Step 2.—The problem is defined, and possible solutions considered.

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Step 3.—Controlled experiments are set up and observations made.

Step 4.—A conclusion is drawn based on the results of experimental and other observations.

No one would quarrel with the fact that it is highly necessary to follow these steps in solving problems of science in industry and commerce. Yet when it comes to problems that concern ourselves, that involve our own personal happiness and success, we make little or no attempt to solve these problems by following any kind of a controlled procedure. And even now you may be secretly rebelling at the thought that there is any mold or pattern to be followed in dealing with problems that are so highly personal as your own.

Nevertheless, these same four simple steps must be followed if you are ever to think straight on any subject, not excluding your personal problems from the most trivial to the most important. But we are primarily concerned here with the task of showing how these steps can be safely

FOUR SIMPLE STEPS FOR CHOOSING YOUR CAREER applied to the problem of making an intelligent selection of your life's work.

In order to make this perfectly clear, let us restate these four steps in terms of this problem.

✓ Step 1.—Making precise observations about your basic abilities, your likes, and your dislikes.

✓ Step 2.—Defining your vocational problem and considering possible solutions.

Step 3.—Securing evidence on possible solutions.

Step 4.—Weighing evidence and making your final selection.

One chapter will be devoted to each of these four main steps, and in each chapter simple rules will be given for the performance of that step.

These rules will show you how to solve your vocational problem in the most scientific and approved manner. They will point out the necessity of separating facts from hearsay and opinion. They will teach you to make precise observations. They will show you how to define your real problem and keep you from getting sidetracked from

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the main issue. They will help you to consider all possible solutions to your problem instead of blinding yourself to the consideration of only one possible course of action. They will show you how to collect evidence that has an important bearing on your problem, how to weigh this evidence, and finally how to make a sound selection of your career.

After you have gone through these various steps in the selection of your career, you will know all the whys and wherefores that led to your selection. You will know where you are going and you will know why. Your life objective will be solidly grounded in and supported by reason. Under these circumstances, it will not be so easy for others to come along and discourage you. Neither the half-baked opinions nor the superficial derision of family or friends or anyone on the outside will dissuade you from pursuing the course which you have decided upon. And you will be sufficiently sure of yourself not to yield to such superficial excuses as "I haven't the time" or "I haven't the money." You will somehow contrive to find the time to progress in the line of

FOUR SIMPLE STEPS FOR CHOOSING YOUR CAREER work which you have discovered, after systematic study, to be your very own. And you will clearly understand that money is secondary and that rewards in both money and personal satisfaction come in due time to anyone who sincerely devotes himself to a life of service in the line of work for which he is best fitted and which he loves most.

These simple Rules for Straight Thinking will prove to be your greatest protection against the negative and destructive mental attitudes which have been outlined in the previous chapters. They will provide you with the soundest assurance that you are headed in the right direction.

You will find no difficulty in following them, providing you do not insist upon reading yourself out of the picture with the thought: "But no set of rules can fit my problem. My case is different." It's easy enough to delude yourself into believing that you are faced with a peculiar set of circumstances which makes it impossible for you to apply any set of rules. One of the commonest tendencies with all of us is to hide behind a poor excuse and, in self-defense, call it a reason

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for not doing what we want to do. Unless you are able to overcome this human tendency and be fearlessly honest with yourself, you will be stopped at the very outset.

Without the guidance of these rules one is likely to drift into whatever line of work happens to present itself. Unfortunately, that is what happens to most people. Relatively few ever consciously seek to discover or define their special ability. Consequently, that ability is never fully exercised or developed. Instead of carrying on a systematic study of themselves, most men leave the selection of their occupation to chance. They become failures, not because they lack ability, but because they are in the wrong work. In a land with an unlimited amount of education, we have misfits everywhere, watching the clock, wishing that days were done.

The man in the wrong job who fails works ever so much harder than the man in the right job who succeeds. Effort, well directed, is the formula for achievement.

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVING YOUR BASIC ABILITIES, LIKES, AND DISLIKES

WHY WE KNOW SO LITTLE ABOUT OURSELVES

THE world not only asks "What can you do?" The world also asks "How well can you do it?" The important question, then, is not, "What can you do?" but, "What can you do best?"

To answer that question requires a lot of digging. It requires an analysis of YOU, a definition of your special ability, your personal likes and dislikes.

"Know thyself" is one of the most profound thoughts that Socrates and other early philosophers ever expressed. To know yourself sounds simple, but it isn't. Cervantes said, "Make it your business to know yourself, which is the most difficult lesson in the world."

Now why is it so difficult for you to know yourself?

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WE HAVEN'T THE COURAGE TO BE OURSELVES

In the first place, before you can know yourself you must *be* yourself. Unfortunately, "Be yourself" has come to be such a familiar expression to all of us through the slang of our day, that it is mouthed by people who have not the slightest conception of what it really means.

We find it difficult to be ourselves simply because each of us spends most of his time trying to be like somebody else. All of us have certain friends or business associates or public idols whom we subconsciously attempt to copy. When we are talking to a new acquaintance whom we admire, we make an unconscious effort to assume at least some of the characteristics of that person, however unnatural these characteristics may be for us. On the other hand, when we are talking to some one whom we dislike, we unknowingly try to be just the opposite of that person, however contradictory that may be.

So from day to day we become victims of a never-ending series of hero-worshipping and enemy-hating influences, some of which offset others and

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most of which are so completely foreign to our real selves that we become confused, bewildered, and characterless.

Not many people have the courage to be themselves. Most of us are conformists. We say and do what others expect us to say and do. We are a bundle of compromises. In our futile pursuit of the favor of our family and our circle of friends, and in our desire to conform with their standards of life and conduct, we yield a little here and a little there until the part of our individual self that is left has just about reached the vanishing-point.

If you want to get a measure of yourself, anticipate spending an entire day *alone*—without anyone around you and without anything to do. If you shudder at the thought of emptiness, maybe there is very little left of you to be with.

WE ARE TOO BUSY TO GET ACQUAINTED WITH OURSELVES

The second reason why we do not know ourselves is that we do not take the time to get acquainted with ourselves. We keep the larger share

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of our time fully occupied with a set routine. Whenever we do have some spare time, we are "too tired" to do anything but read the newspaper, listen to the radio, go to the movies, play bridge, take an automobile ride, or kill time some other way that does not disturb our mental slumbers. We are forever saying to ourselves, "What shall I do?" "Where shall I go?"—never "What shall I think about?"

We are very careful never to be alone. If our individuality knocks at the door of our mind, we are about as hospitable as the housewife is to a magazine salesman. Finally, it gets tired knocking at the door and begins to lose hope of ever getting in to express itself.

WE MISINTERPRET OUR EXPERIENCES

In the third place, we do not know ourselves because we do not know how to interpret our experiences properly. To "learn by experience" has been drummed into the minds of all of us. But we have not been sufficiently warned that without the proper study, experience will teach us a lot of things that are not so. All of us "know by experience" a lot of things that are not true.

OBSERVING YOUR BASIC ABILITIES

A young man in Pittsburgh told me "I'd like to go into selling, but I know I can't sell." Then he went on to tell me of a previous experience in selling at which he had failed. When I analyzed this experience I found that he had had a job at one time attempting to sell a household appliance from door to door (which he didn't believe in), that he had received no systematic training for the job, and that he had been "canned" by a district supervisor who told him that he "didn't have the gift of gab."

Today this same man, after about a year and a half of intelligent training on the sales staff of an organization that manufactures machinery and mill supplies, has recently been made a district sales manager.

A "misfit" son of a plumber just out of high school told me, "There's nothing in the world I'd rather do than write. But my stuff's no good."

In his senior year he had barely passed his English course because of a "run-in" he had with the instructor who indignantly branded some of his voluntary compositions as radical, dangerous, and sacrilegious. As a matter of fact, the boy had considerable natural ability. True, he lacked diplo-

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macy, but he had imagination and he had fresh ideas. I convinced this young man that this previous experience of his did not prove that his stuff was no good or that he couldn't write. What he really needed was sympathetic training and a lot of it, and I recommended a school of journalism where he could get it.

These are the three reasons, then, why we do not know ourselves—we are trying to be like somebody else, we do not take the time to get acquainted with ourselves, we do not know how to interpret our experiences properly.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST DESIRE?

Everybody wants something. Most of us could name a number of things. I have asked many people "What is your greatest desire?" and I have found that most of them say that they want money or something that money will buy.

Nearly everyone begins with an immediate need. A hungry man on the street told me that he wanted a good square meal. A young man in a three-cornered love-affair told me that his greatest desire was to get enough money so he could pro-

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pose marriage. An unemployed man wanted a job. A man worth millions of dollars wanted to break away from the responsibilities of his work and to travel.

Suppose we were able to grant the wishes of these people. After the hungry man was fed, after the young man married, after the executive took the trip around the world, after the unemployed man got a job, each would then want something else. And after that, something else. Most people jump from one immediate desire to another—apparently without ever realizing that they really want something that is much more basic. The most fundamental and lasting desire in the human heart is to follow one's interests. There is really only one way in which any man has ever gained true happiness, and that is by expressing himself in his own way in the line of work for which he is best fitted and which he loves most.

Most men die without ever realizing this.

The first thing you have to realize is that there is a SELF. It is really an amazing thought that each of us is an entity. No two people are *exactly* alike. In some respects you are different from anyone

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else who has ever lived or who ever will live. Spend an hour alone with this thought and you will begin to appreciate that you are an individual capable of self-expression.

If you feel that you are not particularly talented in any direction, please remember that everyone has *latent* ability in one direction or another.

WHAT WORK COULD YOU GET ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT?

If I were to ask you to run the entire gamut of human activities in search of some possible field in which your abilities could be used, and which you could get excited about, I am certain that you would be overcome with intellectual dizziness before you were even one-tenth of the way through. And so we shall avoid this bewildering mistake which so many have made in search of life's work—this attempt to work from the outside world in to you.

We shall reverse the process. We shall work from the inside out. We shall begin with YOU—your inclinations, your abilities, and your desires.

You may have in mind some line of work which

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you think you would like to follow. Most people do. If you do not, it will be necessary for you to do some systematic "digging" until you strike some provisional fields that capture your interest.

But first and foremost, your life work should be something that you can become absorbed in—excited about. Then you will work without knowing it. You will advance without conscious effort. Sustained interest and enthusiasm are needed for the successful pursuit of any work.

Try this approach. Suppose you were financially independent and perfectly free to do anything you wanted, what life work would you select, if any?

If your inclinations are at all definite, the answer to this simple question will provide at least a general definition of the field of work which you would enjoy most.

Perhaps you may think that you haven't the slightest idea of what you would do. But I have talked with a great many men who have told me just that. And I have found that every one of them had at least a faint leaning in some direction or another, and that this inclination came to the

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surface as soon as they began to review their experiences, their likes, and their dislikes.

Dr. Catherine Cox Miles studied the childhood of some 300 great men and found that in a large share of the cases these men had achieved greatness in work that grew out of childhood hobbies. Consequently, a review of your childhood hobbies may furnish a clue.

Sometimes a person can get an interesting lead by reviewing what studies he liked best at school and what outside activities in school or in community life were enjoyed most.

Perhaps you have at some time during your life built or invented or written or created something original that particularly pleased you and that you considered to be your very own.

Thomas Edison¹ worked out a simple plan for discovering the interests of new employees in the Edison Laboratories at West Orange, New Jersey. Instead of taking their word for it, Edison had a system for finding out the things to which young men gave their attention most frequently. He sent

¹ *Strategy in Handling People*, by Ewing T. Webb and John Morgan, p. 27. Garden City Publishing Company, 1930.

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these beginners around the shops and laboratories on tours of inspection. Each day they made reports with suggestions, criticisms, and comments. "Many valuable ideas come to us from these reports," said Charles Edison, son of the great inventor. "But even more important, we learn what it is that genuinely interests these men—what field they are best suited for.

"A man, for instance, is a chemical engineer and tells us that chemistry is his chosen line. Nevertheless, his reports may show no constructive suggestions in this field, but many on production and layout. These, obviously, are the subjects to which he has paid attention. Then we know, beyond doubt, that his real interests lie here and we put him in that branch of the work."

Similarly, you can apply the same idea in seeking your interests by exposing yourself to various lines of human activity, reading about or, whenever possible, visiting factories, laboratories, offices, studios, mines, farms, workshops of different kinds, or talking with those engaged in various lines of work. After such exposures it will be a simple matter for you to select the line of work

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which captures your attention most frequently. And you can be reasonably sure that the field which interests you most is the one for which you are best suited. Interest is the mother of enthusiasm.

It may be helpful for you to review what jobs you have held, what your duties consisted of, whether you were really interested in any of these jobs. If there is nothing appealing about any jobs you have held, or if you have very little job experience to fall back on, you may find it helpful to recall, as best you can, all the vocations you have ever thought of as a possible life's work from the very first vocation you ever thought of, down to date.

Finally, you may get an idea from reviewing the most interesting and most enjoyable experiences which you have had within the past few years.

While it is true that psychologists² have made some interesting experiments in the development of vocational-interest tests, no method has yet been

² For a comprehensive review of the progress which has been made in the measurement of vocational interests by leading psychologists, see *Measurement of Interests*, by Douglas Fryer. Henry Holt and Company, Inc., New York, 1931.

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evolved whereby any outside person can determine the one line of work which you should follow, for the very simple reason that each person has basic abilities which lend themselves to a wide variety of occupational pursuits. But the selection of the individual vocation from among all these that you feel you could become enthusiastic about is purely a matter of personal taste. And the fullest measure of personal enthusiasm cannot possibly support any choice unless it is yours and yours alone.

It has long been recognized, of course, in educational circles that the real function of any educational system should be to assist each pupil to discover and to develop his own individual abilities, to help him to find out what he likes to do best; that is, to treat students as individuals rather than deal with them in groups as if they were all alike, submitting all to the same standardized treatment which tends to level down rather than develop or extend the individual.

But the practical difficulties and added expense of administering such an educational program have been such that individual treatment has, for

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the most part, been reserved for the children of the rich in private schools.

Bruce Bliven reported in the *New Republic*^{*} that in Russia the individual approach in education is perhaps more generally applied to the masses than in any other country in the world:

"A feature of the Russian education which is coming to be of vast importance is the application of 'aptitude tests' and the subsequent shaping of each child's training in the light of their results. Broadly speaking, the choice of an occupation is already much more the result of these tests than of casual individual preference or family tradition. The examinations are given as early as the age of eight, and are repeated from time to time throughout the school course; at several places in the curriculum an opportunity is made for selected pupils to be drained off into special vocational schools, where they will stay for varying periods, depending upon the nature of the vocation in each case and

^{*} *New Republic*, December 9, 1931, p. 87.

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the special abilities or disabilities of the individual in question.

"These tests are given and the findings followed, not only in choosing workers for industrial occupations, but for the arts. There are, for instance, careful tests for musical aptitude; and those who receive high scores are drawn off into special institutions where they are educated, entirely at the cost of the State, if that is necessary, to become the composers and performers of music for the next generation. American musicians who have had the chance to see the workings of this scheme in detail, and to hear the new music which is being composed under its auspices, are enthusiastic about it to the point of frenzied jealousy that there is no equivalent at home."

However imperfect our present aptitude tests may be, it would be a distinct advantage to anyone if he had a history of his likes and dislikes shown by periodic aptitude tests beginning when he was only eight years old.

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But meanwhile, until the science of vocational guidance reaches a higher degree of development and general application from childhood on, it remains for each person to work out his own problem as best he can. And certainly anyone can find out for himself where his major interests lie if he will only take the time to think about it.

If you will spend one hour a day absolutely alone for the next ten days, reviewing your childhood hobbies, your favorite studies, your school and community activities, the various jobs you have held, the history of your vocational inclinations, your most interesting and enjoyable experiences within recent years, and if you will expose yourself in reading and in personal contacts to various fields of human activity, in an attempt to make some selection of a general field of work which you would enjoy, I am certain that you will soon acquire some pretty definite ideas of what you would like to do.⁴

⁴ If further help is needed in selecting some branch of work which you think you could become enthusiastic about, see *I Find My Vocation*, by H. D. Kitson, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1931; *The Book of Opportunities*, by Rutherford Platt, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1933; *Outline of Careers*, by Edward L. Bernays, Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., New York, 1927.

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DO YOU HAVE THE BASIC ABILITIES REQUIRED?

After you have tentatively selected some general field of work which you believe you could get enthusiastic about, the next step is to list the primary physical and mental qualifications which your selected line of work demands, so that you may be reasonably sure that you do not lack any of the basic abilities required.

Suppose, for example, you have selected Law. It is well to recognize that the lawyer should have a logical and analytical mind, equal to the task of taking cases apart and building them up again, a natural power of oral persuasion, a profound understanding of human nature that permits him to penetrate the thin veneer of poise and pretense and to lay bare the underlying motives of men without ever losing his sympathy for them. He should be a rapid thinker. He should thrill at the prospect of battle, debate, argument. He should have an inherent desire to "prove" things.

On the other hand, a scientist in any field should have no desire to prove things. He should have an open mind, intellectual curiosity, infinite

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patience in dealing with detail, and the desire to pursue evidence wherever it may lead him.

A salesman needs health, nerve, humor, and an ability to stand unlimited doses of opposition and disappointment. He should like people and be skilled in avoiding argument and long-drawn-out, detailed discussions.

If you feel that you are attracted by mechanical engineering, you should be able to work with your hands, invent, design, draw, build, and install. You should have a liking for mathematics and physics.

A person who loves nature, has some artistic sense, some constructive imagination, and likes hard physical labor, would have most of the basic requirements for landscape gardening.

An employment manager should enjoy the appraisal of character and ability. He needs unusual tact and facility in dealing with people and in drawing them out.

A librarian ought to be a natural organizer of systems, a lover of books. He should have a natural interest in what other people read and in the reading needs of the community.

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An astronomer, in addition to a love for the stars, should enjoy working out complicated problems in mathematics and physics.

The physician ought to have a natural knack for sizing up a situation quickly and arriving at a reasonable diagnosis. He needs a highly developed human sympathy, together with a tactful and cheerful disposition, and a healthy body to inspire confidence.

The commercial artist ought to be a man who is either continually giving birth to new ideas or especially successful in bringing to life the ideas of others.

The chemist needs an analytical mind and should thoroughly enjoy working by himself in the confines of a laboratory.

The dentist must be physically strong. He should like the study of medicine and possess mechanical ingenuity and the ability to work with his hands.

The farmer must be an independent planner, as well as one who enjoys working alone with things.

The journalist should have an inherent interest in people and in community as well as national

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and world affairs, a nose for news, an unquenchable thirst for expressing himself in writing.

A geologist should have a desire to plumb the depths of the earth and an ability to organize and interpret his findings, as well as the findings of others, and to arrive at reasonable explanations of the relationship between bits of evidence that are apparently unrelated.

Briefly, then, leaving general characteristics out of it, such as health, honesty, character, integrity, sagacity, stick-to-it-ive-ness, dependability (and a host of other personal assets which are desirable in any line of work), the important point is to list the special and unique requirements which govern the particular field you have selected, and to weigh your natural inclinations and abilities against these. In almost any library you will find references to descriptive materials that will promote your acquaintance with the specific line of work you select.

As a rule, a person's natural abilities point in the same direction as his likes and dislikes. In other words, he usually has the basic abilities to support the kind of work he is most enthusiastic about.

The important point is not to confuse *ability*

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with *training*. Lawrence Tibbett, Metropolitan star, failed to make the high-school glee club. But that did not mean Tibbett did not have the *ability* to become a great singer. It simply meant that his voice at that time was *untrained* and undeveloped.

WHERE DO YOU BELONG—IN CREATIVE OR EXECUTIVE RÔLE?

However, in observing your basic abilities, it is well to recognize in advance that in any general field of endeavor there is room for two kinds of men:

1. Men of thought
2. Men of action.

The first type of man is the "student" type, who experiments, who creates, who analyzes, interprets, and summarizes his own work and the work of others.

The second type of man is the "do-er" type, who organizes, promotes, administers, and executes the mental creations of the student type.

If you have creative ability, you know it without anybody telling you. Your creative talents have demanded expression in your boyhood or in your early youth. If there is any doubt in your

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mind as to whether you belong in the creative rôle or the executive rôle, in all probability you belong in the latter. That is where most people belong.

In some rare cases a man is a balanced combination of both types. But in most instances his abilities are more emphasized in one direction than in the other.

To recognize this in advance is of primary importance, for in so many cases a man who is primarily a do-er casts himself in a creative rôle, or vice versa, with the obvious result that he makes the belated discovery that he lacks the native ability required to progress past a certain point. Then he must either start over or resign himself to a mediocre position.

When you feel that you have spent sufficient time in getting acquainted with your basic abilities, likes, and dislikes, you will be ready to apply the following rules to your own case.

RULES FOR MAKING PRECISE OBSERVATIONS

Rule 1. Define the primary facts in connection with your observation, and separate these facts from any opinions or impressions.

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Rule 2. Analyze the facts, as far as they will permit, from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where.

To illustrate the practical application of these rules, let us begin with one of the general observations mentioned in Chapter II. You will recall the case of Thomas Arnold⁵ who tried to sell me some insurance in Hollywood. Restating his observation about himself:

"What I like best is to hang around Police Headquarters. I've made friends with a few of the men on the detective force down there. They tip me off when criminal cases come up. That's the kind of stuff that fascinates me. If I had it to do over again, that's what I'd study. I've often thought I'd like to quit the insurance job and get into detective work. But my wife thinks I'm crazy to waste time thinking of such a thing. As she says, it's too late now, me married with two kids. Selling insurance is a lousy way to make a living, but we're eating."

Applying Rule 1 to Arnold's observation—de-

⁵ A real case, but a fictitious name, for obvious reasons.

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fining the facts and separating them from opinions
—we find that the primary facts are:

- (1) He likes to hang around Police Headquarters.
- (2) He has made friends on the local detective force.
- (3) He is fascinated with criminal court cases and spends as much time as he can in that atmosphere.
- (4) He would like to get into detective work.

The rest of the observation is largely opinion—that he is "crazy to waste time thinking of such a thing," and that it is too late for him to consider the matter because he is married and has two children.

Next let us apply Rule 2—the analysis of the facts concerning his basic abilities, likes, and dislikes from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where.

Further questioning filled out the basic facts as follows:

WHAT.—This young man's scholastic history

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showed that he had considerable natural ability in debating and public speaking, and that logic and commercial law were his favorite subjects. Furthermore, his main interests lay somewhere in the field of crime.

WHO.—A review of the court cases which this young salesman had naturally sought out showed that he was primarily interested in cases involving young men from eighteen to twenty-one years of age, and an examination of his community background further supported this interest in that he had a Sunday-school class of young men.

WHEN.—This interest in crime dated all the way back to his boyhood, when he used to read all the detective stories he could lay his hands on, and showed considerable interest in some of his uncle's books on criminal law.

WHERE.—His interest in crime definitely centered around the courtroom and what happens there.

Now we have an observation that is based on a well-rounded statement of the pertinent facts regarding this young man's basic abilities, likes, and

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dislikes—an observation free from the muddying effects of the opinions of other people. In the next chapter we shall see how this young insurance salesman defined his vocational problem and considered possible solutions.

CHAPTER V

DEFINING YOUR REAL PROBLEM AND CON- SIDERING POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

DEFINE YOUR REAL PROBLEM

AFTER you have followed the rules for making precise observations, you are in position to construct a precise and analytical definition of your real problem from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where. But at this point there is one trap to look out for. It is so easy to take the first solution that happens to pop in your mind and mistake that for your real problem.

A young man whose basic abilities and personal preferences definitely pointed toward the field of advertising and merchandising, told me, "My real problem is to get a job with an advertising agency." As a matter of fact, this represented only one possible solution to his problem and he was blinding himself to other possible markets for his

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services among manufacturers, publishers of newspapers or magazines, radio stations, outdoor advertising companies, printers and other types of organizations involved in the creating, buying, and selling of advertising.

From the very beginning, Arnold had assumed that his problem was to get into detective work. Here again, this was only one possible solution to the real problem which he finally stated as follows:

"What vocations would permit me to

- (1) work in the field of crime,
- (2) concentrate on cases involving young men,
- (3) exercise my natural ability in public speaking,
- (4) center my interests around a courtroom?"

Obviously, this kind of statement of your real problem opens your eyes to the "total situation"—embracing all possible markets for the services you have to offer—and once you see your problem in this light you are less likely to overlook those

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possible solutions which may prove to be the most promising.

LIST ALL POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Even though you define your problem with the total situation in mind so that it encompasses all possible fields in which your natural abilities and aptitudes may be used, there is a further point to look out for. You may find yourself arbitrarily rejecting many of the possible solutions which suggest themselves without giving them the consideration which they deserve.

It is so common for people to dismiss the thought of ever attaining any goal which involves extended preparation. The young man already mentioned who was interested in Egyptology was not at all inclined in the beginning even to consider the possibility of his getting a job with an expedition. He looked upon this as being "impossible." Later, this expeditionary work turned out to be the most promising solution to his problem.

To continue Arnold's case, it was only after he

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was warned on this score that he could think of any possible solutions other than becoming a detective. But when his final list was made up, it included two others.

Arnold's possible solutions:

- (1) detective work
- (2) practicing lawyer, specializing in cases involving young men
- (3) criminal court judge.

Now, and not until now, did Arnold fully realize the hazards of thinking that his problem was to get into detective work. He could see now that he had been blinding himself to other possible vocations that might even more fully satisfy him. In the following chapter, we shall see how Arnold began to accumulate evidence on each of these possible solutions.

Right now in your own mind you will probably find yourself defining your problem in terms of some specific vocation, rather than viewing it with the total situation in mind.

One of the simplest ways that you can test the statement of your own problem is to ask yourself:

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- (1) Is my statement based merely on a general observation, or have I thought it through completely from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where?
- (2) Have I stated my real basic problem, or merely one possible solution to it?

If you have succeeded in stating your problem correctly, some of the most promising solutions will be suggested from an examination of the subdivisions of the fields which interest you most in search for those branches which have most recently been developed.

WHICH BRANCH IS LEAST WORKED?

In listing all possible solutions to your basic vocational problem it is wise to subdivide your general field in a search for a branch that is comparatively new and least worked.¹ This step is commonly overlooked. Even men who have a background of education and experience far above the average so often "spread themselves too thin" over various subdivisions of some general field without

¹ See *New Careers for Youth*, by Walter B. Pitkin. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1934.

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making any conscious effort to restrict themselves to one small subdivision in which little or no work has been done and in which they might excel.

But you may say, "It's mighty difficult to find something new." As a matter of fact, it is nothing of the sort. All it requires is a recognition of the importance of the step, plus a certain amount of systematic thinking. For example, I stopped one afternoon to talk with a young man whom I found building fences. He told me he had never yet been employed in any work that really interested him. But he had an idol. It was Admiral Byrd. "I'd like to be an explorer of some kind," he said. I told him to read about the work of Roy Chapman Andrews, world-famous explorer; sketched the wide variety of possible fields in which an "explorer" might find himself (biology, geology, zoology, entomology, botany, geography, anthropology); explained that a man might begin his work as an explorer by studying such subjects as the flowers, the trees, the insects, the animals, the pests, the birds, the geological formations, the buried remains of past centuries, right near his home; and

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pointed out that the surface has merely been scratched in most fields of exploration.

Some time later, after he had had an opportunity to think about the matter and to follow certain suggestions, he wrote me:

"I have always loved the study of different forms of plant and animal life. Regardless of the small monetary returns, I would be perfectly happy in this field of work. Following your suggestion, I have segregated the general field into three main divisions:

1. The exploration and study of submarine life.
2. The discovery of rare and valuable forms of animal or plant life on the earth's surface.
3. Paleontology.

"The first division has been least worked, for obvious reasons. The ocean covers more territory than land. The process of exploration under the sea is far more difficult and extremely slow. As yet only a few sections of undersea life have been studied. There is no

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reason why submarine life should not be different in different localities, as plant and animal life vary on different parts of the earth's surface. So you see, here is a field with a romantic and perhaps profitable future.

"This division of the work would interest me most. After I have read up a little more on deep-sea explorations and have entered into correspondence with such men as Dr. William Beebe and Otis Barton, I shall be able to select some small subdivision of this field in which nothing has ever been done.

"In this line of work a person must have an intense love for his work. He must have patience unending, and he must not be guided by any hope for monetary gain. All of these qualities I know I have."

I know another young man who in his twenties became interested in one of the oldest fields known to man—marketing, trading. The first time two men ever met on this earth, each probably traded something that he had for something that he wanted. There are a great many divisions of mar-

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keting, such as advertising, selling, merchandising, transporting, designing products, studying present and potential markets, and there are a great many subdivisions of each of these—all of which have been pretty well worked over. Yet by specializing in one minute subdivision of the study of consumer markets in which little work had been done (the technique of gathering dependable, first-hand information in personal interviews with consumers), this young man has within a few years achieved an authoritative position in that field with an income that runs in five figures.

Recently I met a young high-school teacher whose early interest in bugs and insects—the general field of entomology—led to his present specialization in the study of parasitology. For several years now he has been attending the summer sessions at one of our larger universities, and will soon qualify for the doctor's degree in his chosen work.

Two young men with whom I have worked were interested in geology. One now specializes in Egyptology; the other in designing surface instruments for the detection of oil deposits.

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Two others whose original interests were in the general field of law are now quite far apart; one is interested in criminal law as applied to juvenile cases, the other in bankruptcy and receivership cases.

A men's-clothing salesman, fed up with his job, but interested in physical education, now specializes in the study of athletic games appropriate for students of high-school age.

Of three young men who wanted to write, one specializes in interviewing famous people; one writes children's stories; one prepares publicity articles for technical products.

A young architect now specializes in the study of "fabricated" homes for a large manufacturer of building materials.

An art metal-worker now specializes in creating unique metal ornaments and fixtures for the home.

A young man fresh from college and interested in the general field of retailing, found, in his talks with some department-store owners, that there were unsolved problems in the credit departments of these stores that interested him. He began specializing in the retail credit field and about a year

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later he confined his efforts to the new field of community credit systems. Within three years he had published several monographs on credit problems and was appointed secretary-manager of the Retail Credit Men's Association in one of the most influential states of the Union. Recently he was appointed to an important post in a national credit association.

All these men are on the way up. They are getting somewhere fast because they are digging up new ground. They have not thrown themselves into circumstances where the chances of discovering anything new are negligible. They are not wasting their efforts in an impossible fight with thousands of others in a field that is already thoroughly worked over.

There are literally thousands of fields untouched—waiting to be explored—waiting to be opened by the inquiring mind. The only reason why we hear so little of them is that most of us act like sheep, saying, "I think I'll go into business," or "I think I'll go into accounting," or "I think I'll go into Law," or "I think I'll study engineering," or "I think I'll go into medicine." We simply follow

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a beaten path and go into some general field without realizing that every one of these general vocations has many divisions, and a great many more subdivisions requiring various kinds of abilities and leading to widely separated destinations. Instead of seeking some suitable subdivision of a selected field that is comparatively new, we blindly throw ourselves into open competition with thousands of others and finally settle down wherever we happen to be thrown in the struggle.

In the selection of life's work, most of us behave as if we had no intelligence or imagination whatsoever. You, or anyone else who can read, can look over the authoritative literature in any field and find there a statement of what is needed in that field. You, or anyone else who can write, can communicate with leaders in any field who will be very glad to tell you some of the unsolved problems that lend themselves to specialized work and study.

If you can stake out an entirely new claim that has never been worked, that is ideal. Then, whatever you do will be new. It may be a fit subject for publication. And you will be able quickly to

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achieve an authoritative position within your own little bailiwick.

Now let us summarize the rules discussed in this chapter.

RULES FOR DEFINING THE REAL PROBLEM AND CONSIDERING POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Rule 3. Construct a precise and analytical definition of the real problem, from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where.

Rule 4. Keeping the total situation in mind, list all possible solutions that suggest themselves.

Rule 5. Classify these solutions in order of preference.

Rule 6. Select the most promising solutions for further examination.

CHAPTER VI

SECURING EVIDENCE ON POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

THE next step in the scientific selection of your career is to secure evidence on the various possible solutions which you have listed. This is in many respects the most critical stage. We have seen how the superficial opinions of members of our family, our friends, and our associates keep us from making precise observations in relation to our basic abilities. Similarly, these same opinions are likely to keep us from gathering complete and authoritative evidence on the possible solutions to our vocational problem. Therefore, avoid discussing the matter with members of your family who have special interests involved, with your present employer who may have some axe to grind, or with personal friends whose opinions on such matters may be next to worthless.

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At this stage your job is to seek evidence from unbiased authorities in those lines of work which you have tentatively selected.

SEEK EVIDENCE FROM AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES

No matter what provisional fields you are considering as possible solutions for your vocational problem, you will find at the public library a wealth of printed materials in books and magazines that will help to answer your most important questions from the standpoint of what these activities consist of, what preparation is necessary to enter them, and what opportunities are offered after you get into the work itself.

Another important source of unbiased information is our outstanding institutions of learning, and it is a simple matter to enter into correspondence first with the registrar, and then with the heads of whatever departments of study you are considering in order to promote your factual knowledge of these fields.

Outstanding practical workers in the various fields which interest you represent a third and extremely valuable source of evidence. Although

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people who are actually engaged in any field may be highly opinionated, yet it is possible to strip opinion from their counsel and to get a factual close-up of actual practice in that field.

If you can possibly arrange to visit the offices, workshops, laboratories, factories, or other places where the actual tasks are performed in the fields you have under consideration, this will greatly aid you in getting the general atmosphere which prevails. Then you can make up your own mind concerning which ones appeal to you most and which ones least.

Incidentally, there is one pitfall to look out for as you gather evidence, and that is that you are likely to become over-enthusiastic about some bit of evidence and assume that you have the answer to your problem before you have exposed yourself to all the available evidence on both sides of each possible solution. Don't be in a hurry. Don't permit your enthusiasm at this stage of the proceedings to make you impatient. And no matter how certain you are that you have arrived at the proper solution, keep your mind open to any new evidence which may arise on any side of the question.

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Decide in advance that you will not jump to any decision concerning your career until you have fully explored the evidence on every possible solution listed.

Here are the rules to follow.

RULES FOR SECURING EVIDENCE ON POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Rule 7. Expose yourself to sources of evidence on all sides of the question, rather than confine yourself to sources that give evidence only on one side.

Rule 8. Appraise the validity of your evidence from the standpoint of its source and the means used for gathering it.

Rule 9. Guard against the formation of opinions or premature judgments while in the process of examining evidence.

Rule 10. Keep the mind open and hospitable to new evidence on any side of the question.

CONTINUING ARNOLD'S CASE

Now let us continue Arnold's case and trace his collection of evidence from authoritative sources

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in relation to the three following possible solutions:

Detective Work.—First Arnold talked with the chief of the local detective force, and secured from him a full understanding of the nature of the job and the assignments which are given out. He found that some of these assignments interested him and that some of them were downright distasteful. His general attitude was that he didn't think he'd like the idea of spending the rest of his life being a "snooper." He also inquired into the preparation necessary for detective work, and found that it might be possible to get into this kind of work within two or three years, providing he were willing to start out as a uniformed policeman.

Practicing Lawyer.—Arnold wrote the registrars of three leading universities, forwarding his scholastic record, and learned that he might reasonably expect to finish his preparations for the bar examination by correspondence in about five years. He talked with two outstanding criminal lawyers and was very much impressed with the fact that a lawyer is able to select his own cases. One of these

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attorneys invited him to sit in on an actual trial and he was thrilled with the prospect of pleading a case in a courtroom, and immediately sensed that this would permit him to make full use of, and further develop, whatever natural ability he had as a public speaker. He liked the professional atmosphere.

At the same time, recognizing that he had a family to support, he could see that there were immediate financial problems involved in following the study of law.

Judgeship.—Through these attorneys Arnold was able to meet two criminal-court judges. From them he learned that the judgeship involves an extended period of preparation. But more important than that, the work of the judge did not seem to appeal to Arnold as much as that of the attorney, for the simple reason that he thrilled more at a fight than he did at the prospect of exercising calm, impartial judgments on cases without taking sides. Then, too, he found that a judge has very little control over the selection of only those cases which involve young men, and these were the cases that seemed to attract Arnold most. This possible

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solution, therefore, seemed the least promising of all.

In the next chapter we shall see how Arnold weighed the positive and negative evidence and arrived at his selection.

AVOID DISCUSSIONS WITH UNAUTHORITATIVE SOURCES

When you begin to gather evidence you will find yourself in the enthusiastic stage of the journey toward your goal. You will be stimulated with a number of entirely new ideas.

At this stage, don't make the mistake of talking over your ideas prematurely with those whose opinions are unauthoritative.

There's an important psychological reason for keeping ideas to yourself until they are fully developed. But relatively few people ever grasp the significance of it. If you gain no other lesson from this book than the one which is to follow, your reading will be worth while, for it is doubtful if anyone ever achieved any goal without practicing, either deliberately or unconsciously, the vital principle involved.

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Nearly everyone has ideas. Many people make plans. But with most of us, our ideas, no matter how good, are soon forgotten and our plans somehow never seem to materialize. Why?

Well, let's see what happens when we get an idea. Several years ago, in one of my hours alone, I got an idea that was new to me. I thought of a plan whereby manufacturers of food products could advertise and get the active cooperation of retail stores handling their product. But somehow I never did anything with the idea. Evidently someone else got a similar idea, for about two years later I received a great shock when I discovered that a company had been organized to provide the same service I had thought of. The company was operating at a nice profit. Of course, as you know, perhaps no man ever made known an invention or a plan that some one else hadn't "thought of that before." But I asked myself one question, "Why didn't *I* develop that idea?"

I took a walk and recalled that, after I got the idea, I became so enthusiastic that *right away* I told a few friends about it. There were a lot of

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questions raised that I couldn't answer because I hadn't thought the thing through. My friends didn't seem to be so enthusiastic and before long I forgot all about it.

I was so interested in knowing why I had not put the idea across and why another man *had*, that I went to see the head of this organization to find out how he did it. In our talk he told me: "When I got this idea, I kept it to myself. I always keep new ideas to myself. The more I thought about it the more difficult it became for me to keep it to myself. But I did. Because I told no one about it I was *forced* to think it through. Before long I had a complete plan thought out. Then I brought some picked friends into the picture and we put it over together."

This analysis of my failure and his success suggested a simple rule that I wrote down on a card. Here is the card taken from my private files under the heading "Mistakes."

Bear in mind, then, that when you get a new idea your initial impulse will be to tell your friends and associates all about your plans—what you are going to do—what you are ultimately going to be.

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2/4/22
New York City
Remember that a burst of enthusiasm usually accompanies a new idea and that the tendency for you to hurry & tell someone, the mental energy generated by your idea is thereby dissipated in the ether rather than in thought. After you talk about it a while, you grow tired. Your idea flows out through the mouth like a weak shallow creek. The energy that would have ~~been~~ developed the idea is released & the idea dies. Don't you talk to anybody about any idea until you have fully developed it. That man held his idea to himself - dammed it up with content - until it gained the power of a deep reservoir.

If you are wise you will not yield to this impulse. If you are so weak that you need the encouragement and applause of others, or if you are so unintelligent that you believe the perfunctory approval or disapproval of family or friends makes one iota of difference, you will never reach any goal.

When you babble your plans here and there, you expose yourself on the one hand to those who kid you along with meaningless and uninformed approval, and on the other hand to those who can think up a dozen reasons why you are an imbecile for considering such a goal.

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Your kind friends will offer criticisms and objections to your program that, in the beginning, you are too inexperienced to answer. They will paint pictures of hardship that will make you afraid.

No matter what a man attempts that is new, there is always a crop of gapers ready to laugh. And those nearest and dearest to him are likely to laugh the loudest.

So instead of squandering your early enthusiasm in a futile attempt to excite the world about you and your plans, preserve that enthusiasm within yourself. Instead of letting your enthusiasm flow out through your mouth like a shallow creek, dam it up. Let it accumulate and gradually gain the power of a deep reservoir. That power will give you the necessary confidence to get started on your first step.

Confidence is difficult to define. But I can give you an excellent example of it. When I was at The University of Chicago my days were full. But I spent half an hour every evening from 5:30 to 6 in the university swimming-pool. One afternoon I

SECURING EVIDENCE ON POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

was in the locker-room, getting undressed, and I noticed that my neighbor was a blind man who was also preparing for a swim.

"Will you take me in to the swimming-pool?" he asked. "This is my first visit to your Chicago pool."

"Be glad to," I answered.

"Now you are at the side of the pool," I told him, "and this is the shallow end. Shall I help you in?"

"Oh no! Take me to the deep end," he laughed. "I like to dive."

This confidence startled me, but I took him to the edge of the pool at the deep end, and he asked, "How far is the water level below us?"

My hair raised just a little. "About two feet below where we are standing."

"Is there anybody in the way?"

"No, it's all right to dive now." And before I had finished speaking he had made one of the prettiest dives I have ever seen.

When the time comes for you to dive into the pool of your new interests, you must have that

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kind of confidence. And don't be disappointed if your first dive results in a belly-flopper. No matter how many times you fall flat, you must have the intelligence to study and to correct your mistakes, and you must have the determination to get up on the board and try it again.

CHAPTER VII

SELECTING YOUR CAREER

It is not very wise to attempt any final selection of your career until there is some practical necessity for doing so. If you are a young man in your 'teens and have not exhibited any sharp tendencies that point to a given field, and if you are pursuing some general course in high school or in college, you should not attempt to rush into some final answer to your vocational problem on the basis of limited evidence, but rather spend a little more time securing further evidence on the various tentative solutions which you have under consideration—perhaps adding to these tentative solutions as you gradually extend your inquiry into different fields.

If, however, you are past twenty-one years of age, and, more important, if you have present or potential family responsibilities, your selection of

HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

a career cannot be quite so leisurely or casual. You will have to get going in some definite direction without much delay if you are to have a reasonable chance of achieving an outstanding position in most any field. For, after all, this does take time, and the advantages of a reasonably early start would hardly be debated by anyone.

As far as Arnold's case was concerned, he was interested in making all haste consistent with sound procedure. And here are the rules which he followed in carrying out the fourth and final step in the selection of his career.

We shall first discuss the rules and then show how Arnold applied them.

RULES FOR DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Rule 11. Set up a balance sheet on each possible solution, stating your evidence for and against that course of action.

Rule 12. Weigh the relative importance of positive and negative evidence in each case, and draw your conclusion in favor of the best course (or courses) of action to be taken.

There are real reasons for going to the trouble

SELECTING YOUR CAREER

of setting up a balance sheet on each possible solution to your problem, no matter how obvious some one solution may appear to be.

Without a balance sheet before you, a certain amount of mental confusion is bound to follow. This confusion of trying to "make up your mind" is so annoying and tiresome that whatever piece of evidence happens to be in your mind when you get tired thinking about the whole thing is likely to affect your judgment unduly and to dominate your decision.

Without a balance sheet you are likely to take the "easiest way out," unduly emphasizing the immediate advantages and overlooking the long-range disadvantages. Any solution to your career problem which involves extended preparation is likely to be arbitrarily rejected if you permit yourself to think exclusively in terms of the immediate difficulties involved, and to overlook the long-time advantages.

If you set up a balance sheet, you at least have the assurance that all the evidence at hand is being considered. You have a long-range picture before you, not only of the advantages, but also of the

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disadvantages, and such well-rounded evidence
will give you confidence in the soundness of your
decision.

CONTINUING ARNOLD'S CASE

At first Arnold thought that detective work was the best solution for him, but he was overlooking the disadvantages which he most certainly would have discovered later to his sorrow. When he learned that preparation for the practice of law would involve at least four years of study, maybe more, he was inclined to throw it out. He didn't have the money. It meant a lot of hard work. It was not until he worked out a complete balance sheet on (1) becoming a detective, and (2) becoming a practicing lawyer, that the importance of all the long-range advantages of the latter solution became apparent.

ARNOLD'S BALANCE SHEET ON POSSIBLE SOLUTION No. 1

DETECTIVE WORK

Negative

1. I would be assigned to
all kinds of cases, many

Positive

1. The time and money
involved in getting into

SELECTING YOUR CAREER

of them of no particular interest to me, and some of them downright distasteful.

detective work would be relatively small.

2. I don't like the general idea of spending the rest of my life "snooping."
3. In this rôle I would not have the opportunity of using whatever ability I have as a public speaker.

ARNOLD'S BALANCE SHEET ON POSSIBLE SOLUTION No. 2

CRIMINAL LAW

Negative

1. Preparation would require four or five years.
2. I haven't the money.

Positive

1. It would permit me to make full use of my natural ability as a public speaker.
2. It would enable me to select my own cases—the ones involving young men, which fascinate me most.

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Positive

3. I would certainly be in my glory pleading a case in a courtroom.
4. I would be a professional man.

A careful study of these balance sheets persuaded Arnold that, after all, the only solution to his problem that satisfied all his vocational demands was that of the criminal lawyer. He projected himself five years ahead and compared what he would be if he followed this course with what he would be if he went on as an insurance salesman. Even his wife realized how much he really wanted to do this thing. She saw that he was actually beginning to hate insurance. If he kept on, it looked as though he might become a miserable failure and she would feel partly to blame. So one morning she told him that she was sold on his going into criminal law. Together, they definitely selected criminal law as his life's work, and determined that they would somehow solve the financial problem.

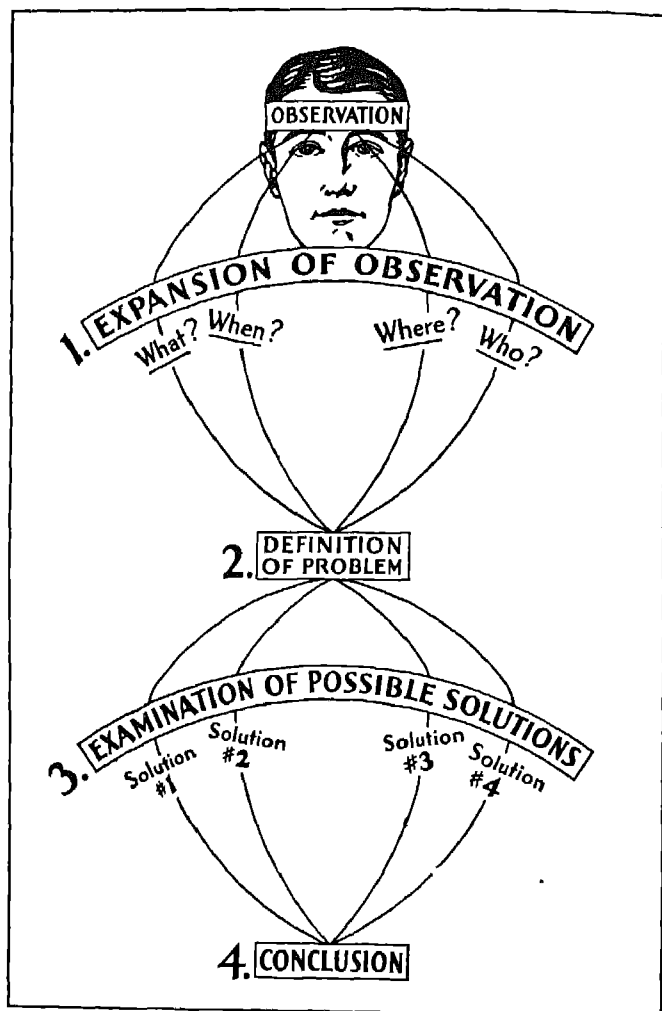
Now that we have completed our discussion of

SELECTING YOUR CAREER

the practical application of the Rules for Straight Thinking to the selection of your career, it might be well to emphasize a statement made in Chapter III—that the Rules for Straight Thinking can be applied to all kinds of problems. The best way to convince yourself of this fact is to begin to apply the rules to every problem you meet.

No matter what situation confronts you, it is always necessary to (1) separate facts from opinions and fully observe the facts from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where, before you can (2) arrive at an intelligent definition of your *real* problem and consider all possible solutions. And not until you have (3) gathered all available evidence on each possible solution can you possibly (4) weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action and arrive at a sound conclusion.

On the following page is a simple diagram of an orderly thought process that will help you to visualize the main steps to be followed. You have seen how these four steps in the diagram can be followed in the intelligent selection of life's work. You recall how Arnold (1) observed his basic



A VISUAL APPLICATION OF THE FOUR STEPS IN STRAIGHT THINKING

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abilities, likes, and dislikes, from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where, (2) defined his vocational problem and listed possible solutions, (3) gathered evidence on each possible solution, and (4) set up his balance sheets and arrived at a sound conclusion.

Referring to the chart on page 106, it is clear that the first step in straight thinking is one in which you *expand* your crude observation from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where.

In the second step you *contract*. You gather up all your facts and condense them into a specific definition of your real problem. All of which permits the listing of possible solutions and leads to step three.

In step three you again *expand* as you seek evidence for and against each possible solution.

In the fourth and final step you again *contract*. The least promising solutions are thrown out one by one, until, by the process of elimination, your conclusion is finally drawn.

SUMMARY OF RULES

I. *Rules for Making Precise Observations*

Rule 1. Define the primary facts in connection

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with your observation, and separate these facts from any opinions or impressions.

Rule 2. Analyze the facts, as far as they will permit, from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where.

II. *Rules for Defining the Real Problem and Considering Possible Solutions*

Rule 3. Construct a precise and analytical definition of the real problem, from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where.

Rule 4. Keeping the total situation in mind, list all possible solutions that suggest themselves.

Rule 5. Classify these solutions in order of preference.

Rule 6. Select the most promising solutions for further examination.

III. *Rules for Securing Evidence on Possible Solutions*

Rule 7. Expose yourself to sources of evidence on all sides of the question, rather than confine yourself to sources that give evidence only on one side.

Rule 8. Appraise the validity of your evidence

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from the standpoint of its source and the means used for gathering it.

Rule 9. Guard against the formation of opinions or premature judgments while in the process of examining evidence.

Rule 10. Keep the mind open and hospitable to new evidence on any side of the question.

IV. *Rules for Drawing Conclusions*

Rule 11. Set up a balance sheet on each possible solution, stating your evidence for and against that course of action.

Rule 12. Weigh the relative importance of positive and negative evidence in each case, and draw your conclusion in favor of the best course (or courses) of action to be taken.

PART II

GETTING STARTED IN YOUR CHOSEN FIELD

CHAPTER VIII

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

AFTER you have made a definite selection of your life's work, you will be ready to contemplate the first step to be taken toward your chosen field. It may sound rather obvious, but I emphasize the importance of beginning with the first step, simply because most of us, contemplating our chosen field, are discouraged at the outset when we begin thinking of all the difficulties involved in the second and the third and the fourth step in our program. We permit our minds to become swamped with a maze of problems which cannot be solved all at once. Consequently, we lose hope before we even get started.

If, on the other hand, you undertake one step at a time and apply the Rules for Straight Thinking to each step as you go along—the same rules which you followed in selecting your life's work—the solution to each step is easy to arrive at.

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We shall see how Thomas Arnold applied these Rules for Straight Thinking in selecting his first step. But before proceeding with this, there is one word of caution which I should like to offer. And that is, don't put off the immediate consideration of what your first step should be.

I say begin NOW to study your first step because procrastination has strangled more hopes than any other human deficiency I can think of. To put things off is so easy, especially if you drug and stupefy your mind with the fallacy that you will be better able to go ahead some time in the future than you are right now.

A mugwump has been described as a bird that sits on the fence with his mug on one side and his wump on the other. And how many birds do you know who spend most of their lives "on the fence"?

Every time you think of starting anything, your mind is immediately overrun with thoughts of difficulties and resistances which you look upon as present and temporary. Just because distant grass *looks* greener, you delude yourself into believing that the future will be free from such difficulties. As a matter of fact, there will always be difficul-

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

ties standing in the way of any new course of action. It will be just as hard to begin in the future as it is right now. It always requires energy to start anything. There is nothing magical about the future. Interestingly enough, the future, when it comes, is just like the present. The present is all you have, and the opportunity of the present is worth more than the success of the past or the promise of the future.

Arnold had a real problem in the selection of his first step to be taken. We have already seen how he applied the twelve Rules for Straight Thinking to the problem of selecting his career. Now we shall see how he applied the same twelve rules to the selection of his first step.

RULES FOR MAKING PRECISE OBSERVATIONS

Rule 1. Define the primary facts in connection with your observation, and separate these facts from any opinions or impressions.

Rule 2. Analyze the facts, as far as they will permit, from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where.

By this time Arnold had learned to separate facts from opinions or impressions, and his factual

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observation from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where was stated as follows:

“My observation in light of my present situation is that I have selected criminal law as my life's work and am ready to prepare myself by taking a course under an outstanding authority in that field as soon as possible at a university which has developed some reputation in law. My financial condition is such that I shall have to continue to make a living and support my family while I study and pay for my course.”

RULES FOR DEFINING THE REAL PROBLEM AND
CONSIDERING POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Rule 3. Construct a precise and analytical definition of the real problem, from the standpoint of what, who, when, and where.

Rule 4. Keeping the total situation in mind, list all possible solutions that suggest themselves.

Rule 5. Classify these solutions in order of preference.

Rule 6. Select the most promising solutions for further examination.

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

Following the above rules, Arnold stated his problem and listed possible solutions as follows:

The Problem: What is my first step in light of the above observation?

Possible Solutions: (1) I could continue to sell insurance while I study law by correspondence.

(2) I could put in my application for a job on the police force, then graduate to the detective force in two or three years, and thereby get some practical experience in the study of crime while I study law by correspondence.

(3) I could move to the city of my chosen university and sell insurance there while I pursue the study of law in residence.

(4) Possibly I could borrow the money, study law in residence, and thereby speed up my preparation.

RULES FOR SECURING EVIDENCE ON POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Rule 7. Expose yourself to sources of evidence on all sides of the question, rather than con-

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fine yourself to sources that give evidence only on one side.

Rule 8. Appraise the validity of your evidence from the standpoint of its source and the means used for gathering it.

Rule 9. Guard against the formation of opinions or premature judgments while in the process of examining evidence.

Rule 10. Keep the mind open and hospitable to new evidence on any side of the question.

Arnold had already learned that he might reasonably expect to finish his preparations for the bar examination by correspondence in about five years. If, on the other hand, he studied law in residence at any of these universities, he could prepare himself in about half the time. As far as the possibility of getting practical experience in the study of crime while pursuing his law course was concerned, he made inquiries at local police headquarters and learned that he could probably pass the physical examination, become a policeman in due time after his application was put on file, and after two or three years get a job on the detective

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

force at least out in some neighborhood station. However, his wife didn't like the idea of his being a "cop."

It didn't take very much calculation to discover that the possibility of moving the family to the city of his chosen university was not very promising because of the expenses involved and the time it would take to develop contacts in the insurance field in a new environment, or to establish himself in any line of work at all that would give him enough income to support his family.

And after discussing the possibility of a loan with three of his "best friends" who he thought might be able to accommodate him, he no longer looked upon this possible solution as very promising.

RULES FOR DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Rule 11. Set up a balance sheet on each possible solution, stating your evidence for and against that course of action.

Rule 12. Weigh the relative importance of positive and negative evidence in each case, and draw your conclusion in favor of the

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best course (or courses) of action to be taken.

While studying law in residence had the advantage of speeding up Arnold's preparation for the bar examination, yet the disadvantage of added expense in moving, the difficulties of making an adequate living for himself and family under entirely new surroundings, and his unsuccessful attempts to borrow money, were sufficient to eliminate possible solutions Nos. 3 and 4.

Here are the balance sheets that were worked out for the two remaining possible solutions.

ARNOLD'S BALANCE SHEET ON POSSIBLE SOLUTION

No. 1

SELLING INSURANCE WHILE I STUDY LAW

BY CORRESPONDENCE

Negative

1. I would be getting no practical experience in my chosen field during the period of my scholastic preparation.
2. The income from sell-

Positive

1. After all, selling insurance is the only source of income that I have right now, and it is wise to continue this until I am able to make

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

ing insurance is somewhat precarious, and I would have this problem on my mind during my entire period of study.

a living in my chosen field.

ARNOLD'S BALANCE SHEET ON POSSIBLE SOLUTION No. 2

GETTING A JOB ON POLICE FORCE AND THEN ON DETECTIVE FORCE WHILE I STUDY LAW BY CORRESPONDENCE

Negative

1. My wife doesn't like the idea of my being a cop — even to start with. I personally don't relish the idea of being a uniformed policeman, or even a plain-clothes "snooper."
2. The income would be a little less than what I have averaged as an insurance salesman.

Positive

1. It certainly would give me a valuable, practical experience that would strengthen my grasp of law as I study it. And this experience would give me more confidence and a more authoritative background which I could use to advantage when I actually get into the practice of law.

HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

Positive

2. While I don't like the idea of being a cop or even a plain-clothes man, yet I would not be either one for more than a few years, and I would be satisfied for that length of time simply because I know that I would be getting some valuable practical experience which I could use later.
3. While the income might be a little less than what I have averaged as an insurance salesman, yet it would be an assured income which I could definitely count on from month to month, and, relieved of financial worries, I could give more concentrated attention to my studies.

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

After studying these two balance sheets, Arnold arrived at a conclusion which combined the advantages of both of the above possible solutions. He decided to put in his application for a policeman's job, to enroll in a correspondence course in law, and meanwhile to continue to sell insurance for a time until his appointment as a policeman came through.

Now you have seen how the Rules for Straight Thinking can be followed in determining the first step toward your selected vocation. Again referring to the diagram on p. 106, you have seen how Arnold (1) observed his career objective together with the limitations of his present situation, (2) defined his problem involved in the first step and considered possible solutions, (3) gathered evidence on each possible solution, and (4) set up his balance sheets and again arrived at a sound conclusion.

Just as two plus two equals four of anything, so the Rules for Straight Thinking are applicable to all kinds of situations. They can be used to solve any problem that may arise, as you contemplate the

HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

second or the third or the fourth or any subsequent step toward your goal. They can be used to solve any of the smaller problems that lie within any of these steps. In fact, they can be used to solve any personal or vocational problem that you will ever face, no matter what art, science, trade, business,¹ or profession you have selected as your life's work.

So it is extremely important to you to begin now to form the mental habit of thinking that way.

You should have no difficulty by now in applying the rules to the sound selection of the first step toward your chosen field. Don't assume that you already know what your first step is. Unless you follow the rules carefully, you will probably make the mistake of jumping over a lot of intermediary steps which must be taken.

You recall the young man who wanted to be an Egyptologist, who thought his first step was to get a job with an expedition. As a matter of fact, his first step was to communicate with Professor Breasted and find out how he ought to go about training himself for such a job.

¹ For an application of the Rules for Straight Thinking to business, see *Straight Thinking—How to Solve Your Business Problems*, by William J. Reilly. Harper & Brothers, 1935.

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

A young man in a florist shop told me he wanted to write. "But I haven't had enough of life's experience to write stories that would measure up to the requirements of leading magazines," he told me, as he clipped the bottoms of the stems from a bunch of flowers and pushed this refuse into a large basket. There he was, thinking of writing for leading magazines. I reached into the basket, picked out one of the stems that he had thrown away, and said, "Your first step is to write a description of this stem."

Later I had him write a description of one of the commonest flowers in his shop every day for seven days—merely to train his power of observation and to develop his power of imagination. Then I had him write an essay every day for thirty days on "A Day in a Flower Shop." Then he began submitting material to some of the smaller publications in the florist field.

You recall the young man who now holds an important position in a national credit association. His first step was to get a job as a lowly assistant and errand boy in a credit department—a job that he was offered by a department-store owner when

HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

he went in to talk about some of the unsolved problems in credit departments.

Remember the man I mentioned who was interested in physical education to begin with, and who now specializes in the study of athletic games that are appropriate for high-school students. His first step was to get a job that had something to do with playground work, and he was content to start as janitor and clean-up man at a city playground.

The young man who selected the exploration and study of submarine life as his life's work, continued to build fences while he took some evening courses at one of our larger universities.

The man who now specializes in designing surface instruments for the detection of oil deposits continued to work at his gas-station job while he pursued his studies by correspondence, and on the completion of his studies toward the Bachelor's degree, was awarded a research assistantship at one of our leading universities.

GET INTO COMPETITION WITH YOURSELF

When a beginner goes out for the track team, the coach does not begin by putting that man in

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

competition with the fastest runner on the squad. The first step is to put the new man into competition with himself. When I first went out for the two-mile run, the coach gave me a stop watch. I timed myself every day. It didn't make any difference how slow I ran the two miles, to begin with. The important thing was to attempt to improve my time each day. If at the outset I had attempted to run two miles alongside a seasoned veteran, I would have been discouraged.

It is perfectly natural for you to compare yourself with those who have already achieved outstanding success in your selected field. But it is a mistake at the start to think of yourself in competition with those who are so far ahead. Such a comparison will tend to discourage you from taking the first step. Don't try to compare yourself with anyone else. Forget all about the position of others. Measure yourself on your own standards. The only standards are what you have done, what you are doing, and how these compare with what you can do. You are in a race with yourself and your own possibilities. Where you start or where you stop has no absolute significance. The only

HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

essential is that you progress somewhere nearly as fast as you are capable of moving. Let what you do today compete with and surpass what you did yesterday. Let what you do today measure up to what you are capable of doing. As long as you do this you will grow, and as long as you feel the exhilaration of achievement and growth, you will be happy.

As you get into competition with yourself, don't allow the magnitude of the task ahead to overwhelm you. Suppose I asked you to eat 2,000 pounds of food. No matter how hungry you were, you would balk. Nevertheless, that's what you do every year of your life. You can do it because you "nibble at it" every day.

Similarly, by devoting some time to your objective every day from now on you can, little by little, achieve it, just as others have.

If you are employed, the shift of emphasis from your present position to the one you hope to gain will be a gradual one, in which you will appropriate only one or two hours a day to your new interest. If you do not believe you can find even this small amount of time, review again a brief outline

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

of what has happened to each hour of the day for the past seven days. Then keep track of what happens to each hour for the next seven days. You will find some wasted time.

During the small portion of your time that you devote to your new interests, you will think and act and work just as if you had no other responsibilities whatsoever.

This separation of your life into two parts will do an amazing thing to your thinking. It will clear your thinking. It will free it from the muddling effects of attempting to think of a number of things at the same time. It will protect you from the feeling of futility in connection with really worth-while plans, simply because it will free your mind from the destructive objections that always come to you when you think of your present responsibilities.

It will do another important thing. It will help you to shift emphasis from your present responsibilities. It will make them appear smaller to you, whereas if you do nothing but think of your present burdens they will become bigger than you. Even though most of your time must for the

HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

present be devoted to your present responsibilities, it is perfectly foolish for you to think that you must give up all hope of ever living.

If you are a student or not employed at a full-time job, your shift can be very rapid, effecting a complete change in your daily schedule.

But no matter how much or how little of your time is involved in your first step, the most important fundamental for you to remember is to exercise the necessary patience to begin at the beginning, and to lead an orderly, systematic, irresistible advance, one step at a time, toward your inevitable goal.

BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

ties standing in the way of any new course of action. It will be just as hard to begin in the future as it is right now. It always requires energy to start anything. There is nothing magical about the future. Interestingly enough, the future, when it comes, is just like the present. The present is all you have, and the opportunity of the present is worth more than the success of the past or the promise of the future.

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HOW TO FIND AND FOLLOW YOUR CAREER
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RULES FOR DEFINING THE REAL PROBLEM AND
CONSIDERING POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

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Rule 4. Keeping the total situation in mind, list all possible solutions that suggest themselves.

Rule 5. Classify these solutions in order of preference.

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BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP

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Negative

1. I would be getting no practical experience in my chosen field during the period of my scholastic preparation.
2. The income from sell-

Positive

1. After all, selling insurance is the only source of income that I have right now, and it is wise to continue this until I am able to make

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ing insurance is somewhat precarious, and I would have this problem on my mind during my entire period of study.

a living in my chosen field.

ARNOLD'S BALANCE SHEET ON POSSIBLE SOLUTION No. 2

GETTING A JOB ON POLICE FORCE AND THEN ON DETECTIVE FORCE WHILE I STUDY LAW BY CORRESPONDENCE

Negative

1. My wife doesn't like the idea of my being a cop — even to start with. I personally don't relish the idea of being a uniformed policeman, or even a plain-clothes "snooper."
2. The income would be a little less than what I have averaged as an insurance salesman.

Positive

1. It certainly would give me a valuable, practical experience that would strengthen my grasp of law as I study it. And this experience would give me more confidence and a more authoritative background which I could use to advantage when I actually get into the practice of law.

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Positive

2. While I don't like the idea of being a cop or even a plain-clothes man, yet I would not be either one for more than a few years, and I would be satisfied for that length of time simply because I know that I would be getting some valuable practical experience which I could use later.
3. While the income might be a little less than what I have averaged as an insurance salesman, yet it would be an assured income which I could definitely count on from month to month, and, relieved of financial worries, I could give more concentrated attention to my studies.

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After studying these two balance sheets, Arnold arrived at a conclusion which combined the advantages of both of the above possible solutions. He decided to put in his application for a policeman's job, to enroll in a correspondence course in law, and meanwhile to continue to sell insurance for a time until his appointment as a policeman came through.

Now you have seen how the Rules for Straight Thinking can be followed in determining the first step toward your selected vocation. Again referring to the diagram on p. 106, you have seen how Arnold (1) observed his career objective together with the limitations of his present situation, (2) defined his problem involved in the first step and considered possible solutions, (3) gathered evidence on each possible solution, and (4) set up his balance sheets and again arrived at a sound conclusion.

Just as two plus two equals four of anything, so the Rules for Straight Thinking are applicable to all kinds of situations. They can be used to solve any problem that may arise, as you contemplate the

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second or the third or the fourth or any subsequent step toward your goal. They can be used to solve any of the smaller problems that lie within any of these steps. In fact, they can be used to solve any personal or vocational problem that you will ever face, no matter what art, science, trade, business,¹ or profession you have selected as your life's work.

So it is extremely important to you to begin now to form the mental habit of thinking that way.

You should have no difficulty by now in applying the rules to the sound selection of the first step toward your chosen field. Don't assume that you already know what your first step is. Unless you follow the rules carefully, you will probably make the mistake of jumping over a lot of intermediary steps which must be taken.

You recall the young man who wanted to be an Egyptologist, who thought his first step was to get a job with an expedition. As a matter of fact, his first step was to communicate with Professor Breasted and find out how he ought to go about training himself for such a job.

¹ For an application of the Rules for Straight Thinking to business, see *Straight Thinking—How to Solve Your Business Problems*, by William J. Reilly. Harper & Brothers, 1935.

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A young man in a florist shop told me he wanted to write. "But I haven't had enough of life's experience to write stories that would measure up to the requirements of leading magazines," he told me, as he clipped the bottoms of the stems from a bunch of flowers and pushed this refuse into a large basket. There he was, thinking of writing for leading magazines. I reached into the basket, picked out one of the stems that he had thrown away, and said, "Your first step is to write a description of this stem."

Later I had him write a description of one of the commonest flowers in his shop every day for seven days—merely to train his power of observation and to develop his power of imagination. Then I had him write an essay every day for thirty days on "A Day in a Flower Shop." Then he began submitting material to some of the smaller publications in the florist field.

You recall the young man who now holds an important position in a national credit association. His first step was to get a job as a lowly assistant and errand boy in a credit department—a job that he was offered by a department-store owner when

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he went in to talk about some of the unsolved problems in credit departments.

Remember the man I mentioned who was interested in physical education to begin with, and who now specializes in the study of athletic games that are appropriate for high-school students. His first step was to get a job that had something to do with playground work, and he was content to start as janitor and clean-up man at a city playground.

The young man who selected the exploration and study of submarine life as his life's work, continued to build fences while he took some evening courses at one of our larger universities.

The man who now specializes in designing surface instruments for the detection of oil deposits continued to work at his gas-station job while he pursued his studies by correspondence, and on the completion of his studies toward the Bachelor's degree, was awarded a research assistantship at one of our leading universities.

GET INTO COMPETITION WITH YOURSELF

When a beginner goes out for the track team, the coach does not begin by putting that man in

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competition with the fastest runner on the squad. The first step is to put the new man into competition with himself. When I first went out for the two-mile run, the coach gave me a stop watch. I timed myself every day. It didn't make any difference how slow I ran the two miles, to begin with. The important thing was to attempt to improve my time each day. If at the outset I had attempted to run two miles alongside a seasoned veteran, I would have been discouraged.

It is perfectly natural for you to compare yourself with those who have already achieved outstanding success in your selected field. But it is a mistake at the start to think of yourself in competition with those who are so far ahead. Such a comparison will tend to discourage you from taking the first step. Don't try to compare yourself with anyone else. Forget all about the position of others. Measure yourself on your own standards. The only standards are what you have done, what you are doing, and how these compare with what you can do. You are in a race with yourself and your own possibilities. Where you start or where you stop has no absolute significance. The only

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essential is that you progress somewhere nearly as fast as you are capable of moving. Let what you do today compete with and surpass what you did yesterday. Let what you do today measure up to what you are capable of doing. As long as you do this you will grow, and as long as you feel the exhilaration of achievement and growth, you will be happy.

As you get into competition with yourself, don't allow the magnitude of the task ahead to overwhelm you. Suppose I asked you to eat 2,000 pounds of food. No matter how hungry you were, you would balk. Nevertheless, that's what you do every year of your life. You can do it because you "nibble at it" every day.

Similarly, by devoting some time to your objective every day from now on you can, little by little, achieve it, just as others have.

If you are employed, the shift of emphasis from your present position to the one you hope to gain will be a gradual one, in which you will appropriate only one or two hours a day to your new interest. If you do not believe you can find even this small amount of time, review again a brief outline

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of what has happened to each hour of the day for the past seven days. Then keep track of what happens to each hour for the next seven days. You will find some wasted time.

During the small portion of your time that you devote to your new interests, you will think and act and work just as if you had no other responsibilities whatsoever.

This separation of your life into two parts will do an amazing thing to your thinking. It will clear your thinking. It will free it from the muddling effects of attempting to think of a number of things at the same time. It will protect you from the feeling of futility in connection with really worth-while plans, simply because it will free your mind from the destructive objections that always come to you when you think of your present responsibilities.

It will do another important thing. It will help you to shift emphasis from your present responsibilities. It will make them appear smaller to you, whereas if you do nothing but think of your present burdens they will become bigger than you. Even though most of your time must for the

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present be devoted to your present responsibilities, it is perfectly foolish for you to think that you must give up all hope of ever living.

If you are a student or not employed at a full-time job, your shift can be very rapid, effecting a complete change in your daily schedule.

But no matter how much or how little of your time is involved in your first step, the most important fundamental for you to remember is to exercise the necessary patience to begin at the beginning, and to lead an orderly, systematic, irresistible advance, one step at a time, toward your inevitable goal.

CHAPTER IX

LAY DEFINITE PLANS AND FOLLOW THROUGH

WHY is it that so many of us never finish what we start out to do? Why is it so difficult to follow through? There are only two real reasons: (1) lack of planning, (2) lack of courage.

As long as you live, you should always be engaged in progressive planning, one step at a time, as you advance toward your goal, and as you move your goal ahead. But it is important to bear in mind that an orderly advance demands a definite schedule.

SET UP A DEFINITE SCHEDULE

No matter how small the first step in the direction of your new interest, no matter how little the time required to accomplish it, a definite schedule will make the job easier, and more certain of

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achievement. In fact, if you do not provide a definite place in your daily schedule for your new interest, it will be postponed, kicked around, finally ignored and forgotten.

Without a schedule, we waste much of our time wondering whether we ought to work or not; then, if we are to work, what we ought to do—trying to select one or two things out of a maze of several that capture the attention of our roaming mind. Our mental machinery becomes so exhausted with the task of selection that we are ready to quit before we even start on the job to be done. A schedule eliminates this waste motion. Give your first step a certain time in your daily schedule, and when that time comes, begin work on it.

Furthermore, the regularity of a schedule assures that you work on it often enough.

Every so often some one tells me, "I'm not much of a fellow for schedules. I like to work when I feel like it. When I get into the spirit of a job, time doesn't mean anything to me. I keep right on going until I get tired."

But everyone knows that a man who works an hour every day on a given project will get farther

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than a man who gets all excited every once in a while and works for several hours at a stretch until he tires himself out and gets all fed up. A person who really loses all sight of time needs a schedule to protect himself against the nervous and mental disorders of periodic overwork.

Very few of us, however, are in danger of overwork. Our main problem is to get started. Before we can get started we must overcome the natural human inertia that keeps us from starting anything new. A schedule takes this human inertia into account and makes it as easy as possible for you to get started and to keep going.

MAKE YOUR SCHEDULE EASY TO MEET

Many schedules are made. But few are followed. Largely because they are too stiff—too difficult to follow. They are built up in a moment of great enthusiasm and confidence and fall of their own dead weight under ordinary circumstances. So make your schedule easy to meet.

First, make your schedule light. Don't try to schedule all of your spare time. If, for example, you have a full-time job, with your evenings and

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Saturday afternoons and Sundays free, an hour or two every other evening with a little longer time on Saturday or Sunday will average about nine hours a week. To begin with, that is enough of your spare time to schedule.

Second, schedule a time of the day or night when other matters are least likely to interfere. For a person with a normal workaday schedule, 6:30 to 8:30 or 7 to 9 in the evening, during the week, Saturday afternoons and early Sunday mornings are hours that are usually least subject to interference.

Third, schedule a time of the day or night when you find yourself best able to perform the work which the schedule requires. For example, if you find yourself too tired to meet your schedule in an early evening hour, go to bed, get your required sleep, get up earlier in the morning and schedule an hour before you go to work. But consider these hourly appointments with yourself just as important as an appointment with another person.

Men who have had every essential to success, but who lacked courage, have died with plans pigeonholed that they never dared to carry

LAY DEFINITE PLANS AND FOLLOW THROUGH through. To find out what you want to do and to take the first step doesn't require much courage. Starting out on any new venture is usually exciting. Sheer enthusiasm sweeps one off to a flying start. But after the newness wears off, that temporary enthusiasm, so high at the start, soon subsides.

In pursuing any goal, each succeeding step usually presents greater hurdles than the last. And after the first burst of enthusiasm fades, that's when we need real courage to follow through. Not the emotional kind of courage that makes a man plunge headlong into a situation without thinking it through. Not the kind of courage that makes savages run through fire, believing that they will not be burned. But a wiser, more reasonable, more substantial kind of courage that is grounded on knowledge—a thorough knowledge of what is involved in each step as you advance in your chosen field, and a knowledge of how to win the cooperation of other people as you go along.

STUDY YOUR FIELD

So often men take their first step in the right direction and then stop because they are "afraid

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something might happen," or "afraid everything won't turn out all right." And that intangible fear is invariably caused by a lack of knowledge of what is involved in the next step ahead. It's amazing when we stop to realize the extent to which we permit our lives to be dominated by hazy impressions and vague hunches, just as the most primitive savages did. The greatest fear-provoker in your life is your own imagination. If there are any insuperable obstacles in your way it is only because you yourself have put them there. Your fears can be dispelled with the knowledge that comes from examining the difficulties involved in each step and learning how they can be overcome.

Suppose I were to seat you at the controls of an airplane and tell you you had to take off. Unless you are a qualified pilot, you would immediately be seized with fear. If, however, you had had an opportunity to study the theory of flying to begin with, and then were put through the four steps in training for flying, you would have gained knowledge that would have removed a large share of the mystery of flying, most of your fear would have disappeared, and after a few flights it would prob-

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ably have completely vanished. Knowledge would
have given you the courage to fly. No matter what
field you have selected, no matter what your next
step may be, a thorough knowledge of what is in-
volved in that step will give you the necessary cour-
age to proceed.

Your next step may require knowledge that can
be acquired in a few months of study; on the other
hand, it may demand years of preparation.

After the young man in the florist shop, who
wanted to write, had set aside an hour in the eve-
ning and begun to write simple essays, he realized
that he could do better if he knew more about the
fundamentals of writing, and his next step was to
enroll in a three-months' correspondence course.

The youth interested in Egyptology soon
learned, when he communicated with educational
leaders in that field, that he would first of all have
to finish his regular four-year college course, and
then it might be wise to go on with a year or two
of graduate study in preparation for his expedi-
tionary work.

But whether the knowledge required in your
next step can be acquired in a few months or a

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few years, the business of learning more about your field is never done, for every step forward makes new demands that must be satisfied if we are to have the courage to take it. If there is any doubt in your mind concerning how you should prepare yourself for the next step ahead in your program, it is a simple matter to communicate with educational leaders in some of our leading universities and with practical workers who have gained prominence in your selected field. They will be glad to advise you.

As you progress, you will find that most of the difficulties experienced in following your life's work are predictable. You can gain sufficient knowledge about your difficulties, so that even before they arise you can anticipate exactly what they are and how they can be met. With such knowledge you will be disappointed if the known difficulties do not present themselves, just as disappointed as a schoolboy who knows his lesson but who is not called upon to recite. Just as disappointed as a hunter who goes after dangerous game, fully prepared, but who comes back without getting a chance to use his trusty gun.

Knowledge will change your entire mental atti-

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tude toward the obstacles that stand in your way. Instead of permitting difficulties to terrorize you and fill your mind with fear, you will look upon a difficulty merely as a challenge that it's fun to meet and overcome.

LEARN HOW TO WIN COOPERATION OF OTHERS

No matter how well informed you may become, no matter how much knowledge you acquire in your chosen field, it is well to remember that very few have ever accomplished much or gone far in any line of human endeavor, without the assistance and cooperation of a great many people. Friends, relatives, employers, business associates, superiors, subordinates, customers, tradespeople, nearly everyone you contact, can speed or retard your journey toward your goal.

Charles M. Schwab is credited with the statement that "many of us think of salesmen as people traveling around with sample kits. Instead, we are all salesmen, every day of our lives. We are selling our ideas, our plans, our energies, our enthusiasm to those with whom we come in contact."¹

In selling your ideas to other people in such a

¹ *Strategy in Handling People*, by Ewing T. Webb and John Morgan. Garden City Publishing Co., 1930.

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way that they will cooperate and do what you want them to do, there are at least three important principles to be remembered.

In the first place, you must understand how to get people to like you. Much can be learned by studying the methods by which leaders in various fields have been successful in getting others to like them.

Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son, "Make other people like themselves a little better, my son, and I promise you they will like you very well."

It has been said of John Hay that "every person who spent a half-hour or more with him was sure to go away not only charmed with Hay, but uncommonly well pleased with himself."²

My little niece, just eight years old, told me, confidentially, "I say thank you to people and am very polite, because when you are polite, people like you and then they give you things."

It is a commonplace that all of us like people who permit us to talk about those things which interest us most. And so, if you would have others

² *Notes and Anecdotes of Many Years*, by J. B. Bishop. Charles Scribner's Sons, pp. 60-61.

LAY DEFINITE PLANS AND FOLLOW THROUGH like you, it is wise in your initial contacts with them, to make yourself interested in what they are trying to do, and to ask questions that will get them talking about themselves.

When Dwight Morrow went to Mexico as ambassador, the situation was tense. The first call on President Calles was very ticklish. "Morrow had nothing to say about the weighty problems with which ambassadors are supposed to deal," writes Bruce Barton.^a "He just passed back for more pan-cakes, praised the cooking, lit a cigar, and asked the President to tell him about Mexico. . . . Next day President Calles said to a friend that here at last was an ambassador who talks his own language."

Sometimes the most effective method for engaging others in conversation that they will enjoy is to ask their help and advice.

Just remember—and be frank enough to admit it to yourself—that the greatest desire in your heart is to enlarge your self-importance and to make a favorable impression when you are talking with other people. You enjoy your contacts

^a *Collier's*, August 4, 1928, p. 82.

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most with people who will permit you to do this. Now consider for a moment that everyone in the world is the same as you are in this respect, and you will readily understand why anyone will thoroughly like you providing you give them the opportunity to assert themselves. Let that be your starting-point. Be patient. In due time they will give you an opportunity to have your say, and they will be much more likely to accept what you say if they like you.

In the second place, you are much more likely to win cooperation if you form the habit of presenting your case from the other person's point of view. In your enthusiasm to communicate your own ideas you are quite likely to neglect to build up your proposal from the other person's center of interest, and to forget that your main job is to begin with something that the other person wants, and then proceed to show him how, by following a given procedure, he can get what he wants. Napoleon was a master of this strategy.⁴ When he took command of the army of Italy, at the age of twenty-five, his appeal to the soldiers was in terms

⁴ *Napoleon*, by Emil Ludwig. Liveright, 1926.

LAY DEFINITE PLANS AND FOLLOW THROUGH of tangible things which they wanted. "Soldiers, you are half-starved, half-naked. . . . I will lead you into the most fertile plains of the world. There you will find flourishing cities, teeming provinces." Later, he addressed his men as heroes, saying, "You will return to your homes, and your neighbors will point you out to one another, saying, 'He was with the army in Italy.' "

Some men whom you contact will want money. Some will want titles. Some social prestige. Some the approval of others. Some fame. And in every case it is worth while to diagnose the fundamental want of the other person, and then to translate whatever you want him to do into a fulfillment of this basic desire.

In the third place, we all know that in sales work, winning an argument does not necessarily get an order. And in our day-to-day relations with friends and associates we do not usually get a person's cooperation or support by proving conclusively that he is wrong. When we undertake to argue a person down on an objection that he has raised, we are, in a sense, performing only a negative task. For even though we succeed in answer-

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ing a lot of objections without engendering the other person's ill will, we still have the job of communicating the positive reasons why he should do as we wish. By letting the other person do the talking to begin with, we can anticipate any possible objections to the things we wish him to do, and we are then able to build our own case in such a way that we further the other person's interests and yet avoid his objections wherever possible.

It is an old adage that the best way to win an argument is to avoid it entirely. But we may as well admit that situations do arise when it becomes necessary to meet and overcome the resistances and objections offered by others. And it is worth while bearing in mind the following principles,⁵ which, if followed, will help to bring the other person over to our point of view when such a situation arises.

1. Don't try to do all the talking yourself.
2. Don't interrupt your opponent (no matter how clever your comeback may be, or how impatient you are to use it).

⁵ *How to Win an Argument*, by Richard Borden and Alvin C. Busse. Harper & Brothers, 1926.

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3. Avoid an argumentative attitude that is beligerently positive.
4. In the first half of an argument, inquire rather than attack. You draw out the heaviest ammunition of your opponent, you show him that you are receptive to his arguments and sympathetic, and you thereby deserve a hearing of yours.
5. Restate clearly and vigorously in your own words the gist of each argument your opponent advances—as soon as he advances it. By stressing your opponent's points, you show that you recognize them and relieve him of the necessity of restating them in three or four different ways.
6. Identify your main argumentative attack with one key issue. Then stick to that issue. Don't digress.

MOVE INTO YOUR CHOSEN FIELD

If you continue to devote a reasonable share of your spare time in an organized effort to gain knowledge in your chosen field, sooner or later you will reach the point when you are ready to

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seek a full-time position in that field. This is the most critical point in your entire program. Even though you have gained sufficient knowledge to make the move, you will tend to put it off. Human inertia is a powerful retarding force, and ordinarily we have to get on a pretty hot spot before we will actually make a major move of any kind.

When I drove this point home to a young man, he came back with a story which illustrates it far better than I could.

"When I was a kid back on the farm," he told me, "we had a dog, and, like most dogs, he liked to lie in front of the fire. It was one of my chores to get up in the morning and start the fires in the kitchen stove and in the fireplace in the dining-room. Every morning, our mut would follow me into the dining-room and plant himself about three feet in front of the fireplace. As soon as the fire got started and warmed him up a little, he would fall into a doze. I used to sit there in a chair and watch him. After a while the logs would begin to throw out some real heat. But that mut wouldn't move. Every now and then he would rouse himself enough to growl at the fire. Then he'd doze

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It is unfortunate that most men in the wrong job continue to doze and growl and snap, but conditions never get quite hot enough to force them to do anything about it.

You might as well recognize in advance that the *first* full-time job in your selected field will probably not be exactly the job you want. You may have to sacrifice some income, many conveniences, and perhaps even a measure of pride, at least temporarily.

After Herbert Hoover had finished his university studies in the field of engineering, he applied for his first job only to find there were no engineering jobs open. But in the course of his conversation with a prospective employer he learned that there was an opening for a typist in this engineering firm. Hoover said he'd take the job, asking if he might report for work four days later. He didn't know anything about typing, but

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in the four days of concentrated study and practice he gained sufficient knowledge and speed to be able to hold down the job. Hoover's main objective was to get a job with an engineering firm and he wasn't too proud to start in as a typist, if necessary.

An office clerk I know, interested in music, studied the trumpet in his spare time and finally reached the point where he was ready to seek a full-time job with an orchestra. He persuaded the leader of a traveling band that was in his town on a one-night stand, to give him a tryout. There was no opening with that band, but the leader was so impressed with this young man that he suggested his name to the head of another orchestra, not so well known, who needed a trumpet-player.

When this young man received an offer to join the second-rate orchestra, it wasn't an easy matter to leave the soft job he had as a clerk, give up his home life, and take his wife along to travel from one small town to another on one-night stands. But he did it. Today he is with one of the country's leading bands, and after a few more years of background he plans to start his own school of music.

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When the men's-clothing salesman, interested in physical education, took a job as janitor at a city playground, his social standing suffered a slight, but only temporary, relapse.

But these men, along with the others I have mentioned, realized that the advantages of getting a start, however low, in their favorite line of work, overbalanced the temporary sacrifice of income, convenience, or pride. Their eyes were fixed not on the immediate job, but on the ultimate realization of their main objective.

In seeking a full-time job in your chosen field there are a few simple fundamental rules to be followed. You are probably familiar with all the rules that I shall mention. But I remind you of them simply because most men do not follow them:

In making your contacts with the organization you would like to join,

1. Take the time to acquaint yourself with the problems of that organization as they affect the use of your services.
2. Locate the one man in that organization who can use you and who has the authority to

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- hire you. Make it your business to see him.
3. Imagine yourself in his position. Talk to this man about *his* business problems, from his point of view, not yours.
 4. Show him why you are interested in these problems, and how your services can be used.

If this man feels that you can help him, you need not ask him for a job. He will invite you to join the organization. Naturally, the first organization you select may not be able to use you. But if you are really prepared and see enough prospects, the desired opportunity will come.

If you are already employed, there are a few simple rules to be followed in shifting from your present job to your selected field:

1. Whenever possible, do not leave your old position until you have definitely secured a new one. An employed man is in a stronger trading position than a man who is out of work.
2. Tell your superior that you are contemplat-

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ing a change. He will appreciate your asking him for advice and taking him into your confidence.

3. Give him the real reasons for your desire to change, so that he will clearly understand that your leaving is no reflection on him or your present position, that the change is being made merely because you seek an opportunity to get into your chosen field.
4. Ask his advice about approaching the organization which you are interested in negotiating with. He may have some personal contacts that will help you. Even if he hasn't, his suggestions and personal endorsement will mean a great deal.

The following case illustrates the practical application of the rules I have mentioned.

A man in his thirties (we shall call him Bob Irwin, though this was not his real name) was a bank teller, but he didn't like it. One vacation, he visited an uncle in Richmond. He became interested in the tobacco business. For a year he talked tobacco to every friend he met. He asked them

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whether they smoked or not. He found out what they smoked—pipe, cigarette, or cigar. He asked them if they chewed tobacco. He asked them what they liked or disliked about the brands of tobacco they used, how long they had been using them, what brands they used to use, why they quit. He took notes. He read books on the subject. He followed articles in sales and advertising journals by leaders in the tobacco business. He watched their advertising.

Just prior to his vacation period the following summer, he got an idea for a leading cigar manufacturer in his own city. His next problem was to get to see the right man in that organization, which isn't always easy to do. But here's the way he worked it out!

He telephoned the company and asked the telephone girl for the name of the general sales manager, learned that his name was Ingram, and asked to speak with him. The operator connected him with Mr. Ingram's secretary.

"But what did you want to speak with Mr. Ingram about, Mr. Irwin?" she asked.

"You tell Mr. Ingram that I want to talk with

LAY DEFINITE PLANS AND FOLLOW THROUGH him about cigars," Irwin said in a quick, firm voice.

"Yes, but can't you give me a more definite idea than that? What company are you with? Does Mr. Ingram know you?"

"You just tell him that Mr. Irwin wants to talk with him about cigars."

"Just a moment."

Presently Irwin heard a click and a deep voice bawled out, "Yes, what is it?"

"Mr. Ingram?"

"Yes, what is it?"

"I am Mr. Irwin. You don't know me, Mr. Ingram, and I've never had the pleasure of meeting you. But I'm very much interested in the cigar business and I'd like to come in and talk with you. I'm a teller at the X bank, but I could stop by any day around noon or after four-thirty."

"Well, I am very busy right now. What is it about? Just what is it you want to talk about?"

"I want to talk with you about that five-cent cigar that your company makes. Within the last few weeks I have talked to some men who used to smoke it, but have discontinued it. I knew you'd

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be interested in this, and I want to talk with you about the reasons they gave me for quitting it."

"I see. Well, I can't see you today. Call me sometime next week."

So Irwin called him the following Wednesday and Mr. Ingram said: "Call me tomorrow at noon. Perhaps I can see you for a few minutes tomorrow."

Irwin called personally the next day at noon.

As soon as he got into Mr. Ingram's office and had introduced himself, he led off with the following conversation:

"I want to tell you how I came to talk with these men about cigars. I have been interested in the tobacco business ever since I visited an uncle of mine down in Richmond. Since then I have been pestering all my friends with questions about what kinds of tobacco they use, and why, what they used to use and why they quit, and all that. I guess I've talked with at least one hundred cigar-smokers and about fourteen of them used to smoke that five-cent cigar that you people make, but they've discontinued it because they say it's not so good as it used to be. I was wondering if you

LAY DEFINITE PLANS AND FOLLOW THROUGH have changed it in any way. How are the sales on that brand in different parts of the country?"

MR. INGRAM: "Well, we're not exactly satisfied with our sales in some locations. There's one spot out there in the Middle West around Cleveland that hasn't been going so well."

IRWIN: "I wonder why."

MR. INGRAM: "I don't know. Do you?"

IRWIN: "No, I don't. But some of your past customers out in Cleveland probably know."

MR. INGRAM: "Say, what are you driving at? What did you come in to see me about?"

IRWIN: "I'm planning to get into the cigar business. And I'm always interested when somebody tells me that sales are off in a certain territory. There's got to be a reason for it. There's some reason why those people out in Cleveland aren't buying that cigar. Week after next my vacation begins. I'd like to go out to Cleveland for you. I know I could find out something."

MR. INGRAM: "Why, man, you don't have to go out to Cleveland! We have three members of our sales force out there."

IRWIN: "Yes, but they are salesmen. They have

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their selling job to do. They probably couldn't take the time to dig into an analysis of that market. Another thing—could they detach themselves enough to find out what your customers really think about your cigars and to get a strictly impartial picture of the situation in Cleveland? Salesmen are usually pretty close to their jobs; maybe an outsider could get some slants that they are overlooking."

After that interview, Irwin told the whole story to his superior at the bank—what he wanted to do, why he wanted to make a change. The outcome of the whole matter was that Irwin's boss highly recommended him to Mr. Ingram, who then decided to let him go out to Cleveland for a few days during his vacation. There he succeeded in locating some of the company's former customers, and he listened while they told him why they no longer bought this brand of cigar. The general objection was that the cigar was stronger than it used to be. Some of those interviewed even called it bitter.

When Irwin came back with his story, Mr. Ingram got in touch with the factory and found

LAY DEFINITE PLANS AND FOLLOW THROUGH that they had made a very slight change in the filler of the cigar, believing that they were improving it by giving it "more character." But further interviews with consumers proved that they did not look upon it as an improvement. The company went back to the same old filler. Irwin was offered a regular job in the sales department. Then he resigned at the bank.

"Yes," you may say, "that worked all right in Irwin's case, but it doesn't apply to mine. My case is different." And that's true. Throughout the entire discussion no example offered could possibly fit all cases. In fact, there has been no attempt to solve your problem for you. You alone can do that.

You alone can decide to do what you want to do. You alone can free yourself from the common excuses. You alone can make your plans and get started. You alone can follow through. In this book are found merely the steps, the principles, the rules to be followed in working out your own case.

I salute you as you set out on the glorious adventure of doing what you want to do, with the knowledge that nothing can stop you from becoming the man you know you can be!

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